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The deadline for Poland

The cabinet and the economy

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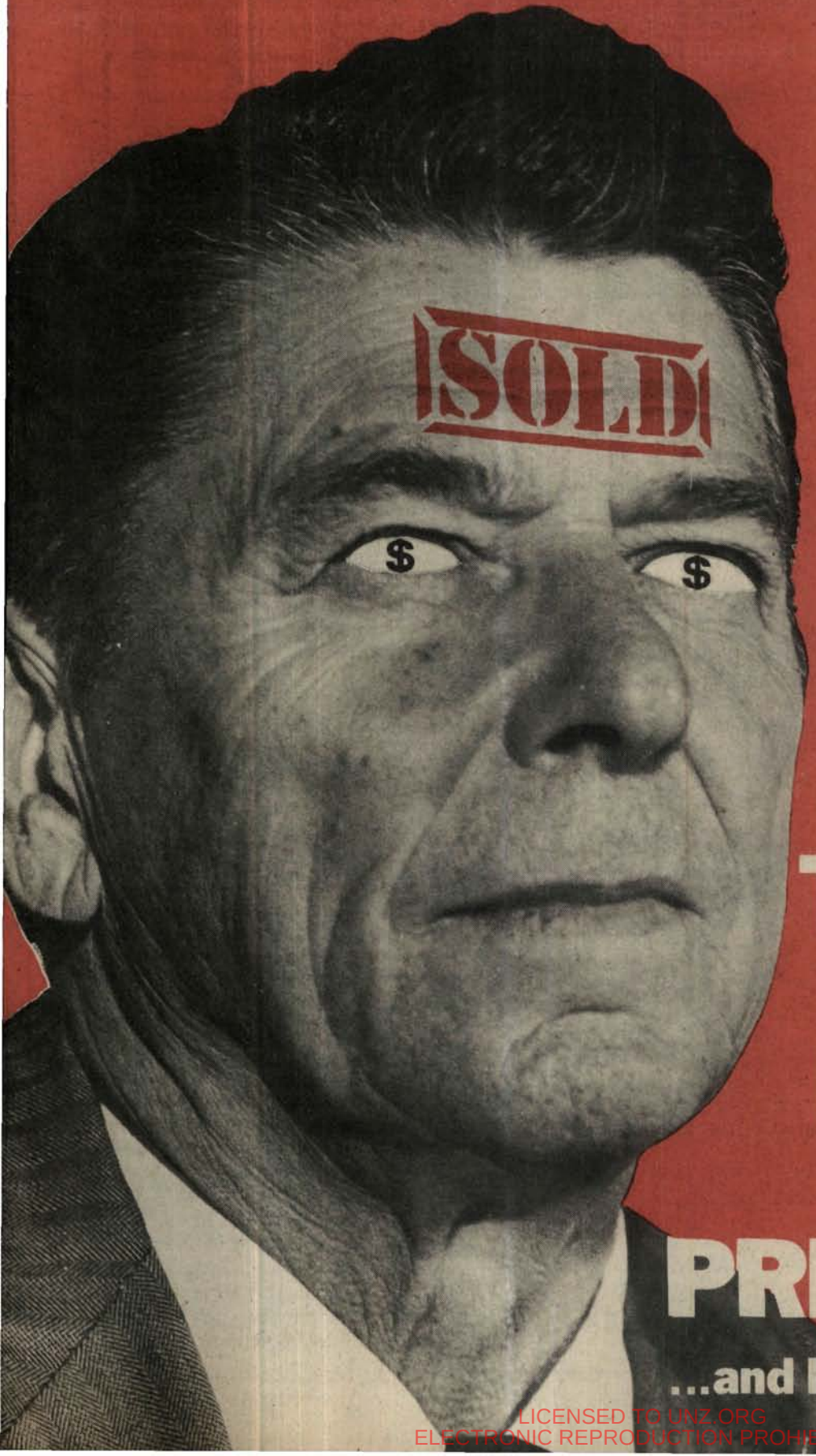

THE MEN WHO BOUGHT THE PRESIDENT

...and how much they paid

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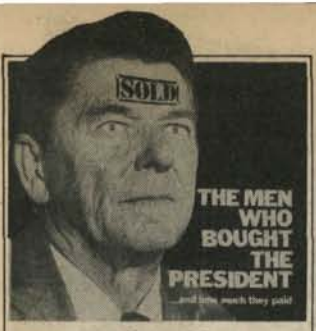

Cover photo: Camera Press

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New Statesman
10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ
Tel: 01-405 8471 Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London WC1
© 1981 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd. Marketing and sales representation by COMAG, West Drayton, Middlesex.

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Bombs and butter mountains

LET'S HOPE that the British Labour Party doesn't become so hopelessly embroiled in its own internal arguments as to miss the opportunity which is presented by the electoral triumph of the French Socialists. There are plenty of reservations to make about Francois Mitterrand. In terms of economic management, his government will not find it easy to deliver the advantages it promises to French workers. In terms of military ideology, it remains committed to the principle of independent nuclear deterrence. Nor does anyone, presumably, imagine that there will be any incontinent abandonment of those French agricultural interests which have provided such durable support for the inequities of the Common Agricultural Policy.

All the same, there has been a major leftward shift in Western Europe's political centre of gravity: apart from Britain, there is scarcely anywhere in the industrial heartland where reaction and the right enjoys power without substantial compromise. Where Washington once found complaisant acolytes, there is now a complex pattern of critics, uneasy supporters and independent-minded allies.

Lawrence Eagleburger, one of Ronald Reagan's principal strategists, dropped in this week to inform the governments of Europe that they face a challenge of 'perhaps historic significance'. Were political changes in Europe to prevent the deployment of Cruise missiles, he said, that would inflict 'substantial and lasting damage' upon the Western alliance.

Give or take a nuance of language, Eagleburger is right. The question — and more than Europe's own survival may turn on it — is whether a majority can be created, and sustained, in favour of breaking up a pattern of alliance which has endured since 1945, and built itself into the political assumptions of many millions of people.

The European nations may be close to the point of making their first significant move away from the thermonuclear symmetry of the superpower system: but this will not look like a foregone conclusion except to those peace-campaigners who preach chiefly to the converted. One point which the French elections have emphasised is that scepticism towards America does not equate — if it ever did — with a belief in Soviet pacifism. There are several reasons for the decline of the French Communists: one being their support for the invasion of Afghanistan.

BRITAIN'S LEFT faces a difficult problem, in being committed both to the abandonment of Cruise and to withdrawal from Europe. Just possibly it could be argued that Europe without Britain would be more cohesive, more self-confident, and therefore more ready to countenance 'substantial and lasting damage' to the Atlantic connection. More likely, British withdrawal would create intense anxiety, and exacerbate existing doubts about Britain's commitment to NATO's non-nuclear capacities.

Within Britain, the problem would be to fight an election on the proposition that both of the country's major foreign policy alliances should be substantially dismantled *at the same time*. The likeliest outcome of that would be a Tory victory, tipping the consensus of European governments back in favour of Cruise deployment.

But Labour cannot merely drop its opposition to the EEC, however useful that step might be in fending off Armageddon. Some part of the anti-European case may rest on chauvinism. But the part which matters rests on the blunt truth that a country with a very tiny agricultural population must suffer injustice under the Common Agricultural Policy. Next year, the temporary deal which (roughly) halves Britain's Brussels bill must terminate. There is, as yet, no policy to replace it: merely a growing belief that the CAP cannot survive in its present form.

A CENTRAL ILLUSION about the CAP, and one which French conservatism helped to foster, is that it exists for the benefit of peasant farmers. Its chief beneficiary, in Britain and elsewhere, is a big agri-business. Any good it does to others is accidental, inefficient, and capable of being done much better by direct income subsidy.

The argument is one to which Mitterrand's government might well be receptive, where Giscard & Co would have been blandly resistant. And that is the opportunity which the victory of the French Socialists presents to Britain: the possibility of a reorganised European agricultural system capable of being put before Labour voters as a tolerable price for keeping Cruise missiles off our, and other people's soil. But it is no use imagining that a dialogue might be conducted through the Foreign Office and the Paris Embassy. The Labour Party itself will have to undertake the process: knowing the risks, dangers and difficulties, but recognising that if one alliance is to be modified or abandoned, then the prospect of creating another to replace it should be courageously seized. □

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Mary Holland reports on the election deadlock

H-block crisis spills over into the Republic

Hung Parliament: Dr Fitzgerald (left) and Mr Haughey

LAST WEEK the crisis in Northern Ireland spilled over, dramatically, into the Irish Republic. It did so, not violently, but through the democratic process. The intervention of H Block candidates in the Irish election was one of the main reasons that we now have a hung parliament in which the balance of power will be held by eight independent deputies, two of them Republican prisoners in the Maze prison.

One of these new deputies, Kieran Doherty, polled more than 9,000 first-preference votes in his constituency of Cavan Monaghan, just 300 less than the man who topped the poll, the popular and well-respected Minister for Education. Mr Doherty is currently in the fifth week of a hunger strike. If he dies, the new Irish government will find it politically impossible to opt for the convenient device which the Conservative Party has chosen to deal with the death of Bobby Sands, and pass legislation to prevent another hunger striker standing in a by-election.

On the contrary, if the H Block impasse remains unresolved, Doherty's death will present a plethora of diplomatic and political problems for the Irish premier, whether that be Charles Haughey or Garret Fitzgerald. According to the Irish constitution the North is part of the 'national territory' and Mr Doherty is an Irish citizen. His death in a British prison while a member of the Dail will provide the Provisionals with a propaganda field day which may well dwarf the death of Bobby Sands MP.

The size of the H Block vote, was the more remarkable because the campaign was riven from the start by internal dissensions between the Provisionals and the more broadly based National H Block Committee. The decision to put up only prisoners was taken late and the actual campaign was run on a shoestring. Yet in every constituency where they stood, they polled creditably, in some cases posing a considerable threat to well-known political figures.

IT WOULD BE wrong to say that the North was the major issue in the election. The opinion polls and the door-to-door canvassing showed that most Irish voters were concerned with inflation and unemployment. But in a situation where none of the major political parties seemed able to offer a convincing solution to the problems facing the economy, the North became a decisive issue.

The final electoral fortunes of all three main political parties depended partly on the voters' perceptions of their ability to handle the Northern crisis. Thus, Fianna Fail, which was in dire trouble for its record on the economy, scored consistently in the opinion polls for Mr Haughey's approach to the North. Dr Garret Fitzgerald's Fine Gael party, on the other hand, offered an attractive economic package, which had the government very badly rattled. But Dr Fitzgerald insisted that the North was not an election issue, thereby misjudging the public mood.

The worst casualty was the Labour Party. It was perceived by its supporters to be too close to Fine Gael on economic issues, but its weak position on the North cost it dear. In several constituencies votes which should have gone to Labour — from the young and from left-wingers — went instead to H Block candidates. The rout of Labour, including the defeat of its leader Frank Cluskey, may now lead to a healthy reappraisal of the party's position, and not just on the North. The process will start this weekend with a special conference to consider whether Labour should form a Coalition government with the much more Conservative Fine Gael party, a step which many of its more radical members oppose.

Given the country's economic ills and the worsening of the Northern crisis, there is an urgent need for a government able to make difficult decisions on a whole range of issues. This will be impossible since the support for such decisions will depend on the eight independents, whose politics range from the outspoken republicanism of Neil Blaney to the radical socialism of Dr Noel Browne. These independent deputies include some of the toughest and most attractive political mavericks in Ireland, but there is no way they are going to operate as a group. Another election is inevitable, and with it the prospect of H Block candidates running in all 41 constituencies.

The Irish Republic has had some cause for pride in the fact that through the long decades of political instability in the North, it managed to build up and maintain democratic institutions which have commanded the loyalty of the vast majority of its people. On the night of the count, as the pattern of the election became clear, an Irish politician remarked to me bitterly of Mrs Thatcher's continued inflexibility on the H Block issue: 'Wouldn't you think the North would be enough for her without destabilising the political situation down here?

Patrick Wintour looks into the achievements of Bernard Doyle

SDP's new man cut 1,000 jobs

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS, Roy Jenkins and other Social Democrats would have done well to investigate the record of Bernard Doyle before appointing him as their new Chief Executive. In particular, they could have taken a close look at his achievements as chairman of Booker McConnell's engineering division.

In 1979 Mr Doyle was responsible for putting one-fifth of the workers in the 5,000-strong division out of work. The sackings, which were attributed to a drop in demand and to the level of sterling, suggest a strong urge to cut and run — coming only a year after the division had made a record profit of £9.1 million.

The most bitterly contested closure was at the Leeds subsidiary, EPCO, which made hydraulic jacks. Four days after Christmas in 1979, Doyle sacked all 170 workers and shut the factory, blaming labour unrest and 'a small minority of the workforce who would not see sense'. A strike over the 1979 wage claim, called after a mass meeting, was the immediate cause. But John Harley, former AUEW convenor, claims the closure was an asset-stripping operation. The shop stewards committee had predicted the closure as early as 1976, he says, in 'a 22-page report which concluded that we would be sold or closed down as we did not fit into their plans'.

Mr Doyle is on holiday this week, but before leaving he told the *Daily Mirror*'s Paul Foot that the strike which precipitated the closure was unofficial and that the grievance procedure had not been completed before the strike began: 'At no stage did the unions declare it official, at no stage were we in dispute with the unions, we would take a completely different attitude to an official strike.' According to to Mr Harley, and to the Leeds district engineering union official, Mr C. Hampshire, the grievance procedure was exhausted and the unions had declared the strike official, providing the workers with £9 a week strike pay for some months.

Bernard Doyle

Once the closure was announced a bitter fight ensued. The stewards occupied the factory to keep it open and police were called in to evict them. The workforce then undertook 24-hour picketing to prevent the removal of machinery: in the end, this was sold for £1.1 million to a Midlands firm, Brockhouse, who continue to make the jacks profitably. Doyle used the strike as an excuse not to honour the redundancy agreement, and only after much adverse publicity conceded ex-gratia payments at 50 per cent of the agreed rate.

HOW DID Booker McConnell come to own, and close, EPCO — a firm which in the sixties enjoyed a 60 per cent share of its market?

Since nationalisation forced Booker out of sugar production in Guyana, the group has been using compensation money to diversify in Britain. The resultant financial, rather than entrepreneurial, growth hasn't always been beneficial to the companies taken over, and fits in poorly with the 'small is beautiful' Social Democrat ideology.

One company taken over in 1976 was Central Wagon, which had one profitable subsidiary that was attractive to Booker — R. G. Brown — and one, EPCO, which was a loss-maker that didn't fit the group's product range.

Within a year of takeover, Doyle had sacked 100 EPCO workers. In 1979 he reorganised the whole plant, putting up compartment walls between each machine, which made it harder for workers to communicate with each other. Even if demand for jacks was falling, the shop-stewards claim that by mid-1979 it was clear that the best use was not being made of available resources, and that the management did not care about EPCO.

Last Friday, at an SPD meeting in Leeds, Shirley Williams was confronted with the outline of this story. She said that 'if it happened, she was sure that Bernard Doyle would not have known about it'. Mr Doyle last week admitted that he was entirely responsible. Possibly slightly longer job interviews should be in order at SDP HQ.

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James Bartholomew on financial dealings in the Philippines

Sweetheart firm may get special deal

Camera Press

CHARGES of 'cronyism', made many times before against the government of President Ferdinand Marcos, have been renewed in the wake of a major liquidity crisis in the Philippines. Several of the large companies which are seeking cash from government banks to help them survive are companies run by Marcos associates. Construction And Development Corporation of the Philippines has received a billion pesos worth of support in a package announced early this month.

The company is run by Rudolfo Cuenca, a long-term friend of Marcos. CDCP has grown spectacularly during the Marcos years partly through huge government contracts to become the one Philippine company big enough compete for international construction contracts. It is building a road in Iraq, and has won another road contract in Sabah, East Malaysia.

The company has suffered through increases in costs, especially the rise in the price of oil. On top of that has come a recession in the Philippines which has hit demand, and there has also been a credit squeeze, probably at the instigation of the International Monetary Fund. (It must be said the Philippine Central Bank does not agree that there has been a squeeze — despite interest rates sometimes climbing beyond 30 per cent — and certainly does not admit that it has been a result of policies imposed by the IMF).

CDCP has been particularly badly placed to face tight credit conditions. Its clients are notoriously slow payers, with the latest balance sheet showing that they take an average of six months to pay up. The company has also borrowed 2.4 times more than the shareholders' capital to finance rapid expansion. This risky approach was probably taken because the company's connections made it over-confident and encouraged banks to lend to it.

In addition to CDCP, there are also two other groups which have grown up fast in the Marcos years and which are now seeking assistance — the Herdis group and the Silverio group.

One of the Herdis companies is an investment house called Atrium. It is in receipt of 1.1 billion pesos of emergency funds from the Central Bank, needed because of a large-scale run on deposits.

This began after a scare in early February when Dewey Dee, a textile and garment manufacturer who has also been director of a bank, did a bunk leaving debts of over 600 million pesos.

The thing which upsets some Filipinos, now, is the idea that having expanded too fast and come unstuck, the crony companies are going to be bailed out by the government. The government denies that there is any bias in favour of the crony companies saying that each case is judged on its merits.

It argues that assistance brings with it stringent conditions. It can point to other companies, such as those run previously by Dewey Dee and a steel company called Philippine Blooming Mills, which receive aid while having no association with Marcos.

But the fact remains that the companies which are 'politically coloured' are disproportionately well represented in the gravy line. And the interest rate on the long-term industrial fund which is the main conduit of support is very low by Philippine standards, at 13.5 per cent. The issue of favouritism cannot be proved one way or another at this stage. But coming just before the re-election of Marcos as President on 16 June the accusation has proved embarrassing.

James Bartholomew is a staff writer on the Far Eastern Economic Review.

Rob Rohrer on a very costly mistake

MoD errs on VC10 project

THE DEBATE on escalating defence expenditure, currently preoccupied with Britain's ability to foot the bill, will turn next week to more disturbing criticism of the Ministry of Defence and its questionable competence in handling major contracts. The new controversy will centre on the MoD's project to convert nine second-hand civilian VC10s into air-to-air refuelling tankers designed to extend the Tornado fighters range.

Originally costed at £44 million by the MoD, the latest estimate has risen steeply to more than £112 million — even though preliminary surveys of the aircraft showed no major structural defects. Real cost increases are put at £34.8 million, topped off with more than £33 million of unforeseen inflation. The MoD's Operational Requirements Committee concedes that the cost increases are a 'particularly bad example of the poor cost estimating that has bedevilled so many of MoD's projects.' Next week the Public Accounts Committee will report its own interpretation of one of the MoD's costliest blunders for several decades.

The RAF bought the VC10s three years ago — five from Gulf Air and four from the defunct East African Airways. British Aerospace are converting the VC10s at their Filton, Bristol, works.

The drastic cost increases are blamed by the MoD on the speed with which they had to complete the VC10 purchase. 'There were other potential buyers', MoD chiefs told Sir Douglas Henley, the Comptroller and Auditor General, responsible for overseas Government expenditure. Before purchase an examination was only aimed at 'establishing the primary structure of the VC10s — even though the RAF had already acquired extensive experience of the aircraft. Once the aircraft had been bought and a conversion programme agreed, it was discovered that substantial costs had been understated or excluded. This explanation was accepted by Henley who noted 'the need for quick action mitigated the errors' but added 'some of the cost omissions should have been avoided'.

But the picture of a queue of buyers for the ageing VC10s is not remembered by commercial aviation experts. 'Other buyers? I don't think that carries any water at all,' one of them told the *New Statesman*. In the late 1970s the over-powered VC10 was nearing the end of its commercial life. Dogged by an enormous thirst and noisy engines, which would have prevented its deployment in the USA after the mid-1980s, it had lost out to the Boeing 707. The latter's popularity means it is a more attractive second-hand buy, with plentiful, comparatively cheap spares.

Who then were the potential buyers who rushed the RAF into purchasing nine VC10s before they had accurately estimated conversion costs? *New Statesman* enquiries show that *one* unnamed buyer had expressed an interest in buying the *five* Gulf VC10s through Dismore Aviation, the London brokers. The other VC10s were being handled by British Aerospace and a spokesman told the NS: 'I don't think there was any serious interest, not that I know of.' The MoD's full report on the costing blunder concludes that the Ministry will have to live with a general tendency towards underestimating future equipment costs — an observation which Sir Derek Rayner might want to pursue.

Rick Rogers reports on a new lead test

London kids 'give a tooth'

TESTS for lead poisoning are to be carried out on all seven year olds in the London districts of Hammersmith, Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea.

The tests are part of a major London study sponsored by the Department of the Environment to check 'the relationship between body lead levels, behaviour and intelligence in children aged 6 to 8'. Children in Enfield and Hounslow are also being checked. Earlier this year, preliminary tests were made on Hammersmith children, without parents' knowledge.

Later this summer, children will be asked to hand in to school any teeth which fall out. Every child will get a badge saying 'I gave a tooth'. The lead content of the teeth will then be measured.

Teachers must complete a behaviour rating form for every child handing in a tooth. The form is in three sections: Attitude to authority (e.g. submissive, defiant, attendance problem); Group participation (e.g. isolated from other children, no sense of fair play,

appears to lack leadership, does not get along with opposite sex); and Classroom behaviour (e.g. hums and makes other odd noises, poor co-ordination, overactive, steals).

Of the 2000-plus seven year olds involved, a special sample of 200 with varying lead levels will be given a battery of tests (lasting 1½ hours) on intelligence, academic achievement, reaction time, and visual-motor and auditory performance. Their mothers will be quizzed on each child's medical and educational history, and the conditions in which the child has grown up. The parents' attitude, interest and involvement with the child will also be 'explored'.

This study seeks to improve on the Needleman research in the USA which revealed that children suffer damage from much lower levels of lead than is officially acknowledged. The London study should be complete by summer 1982.

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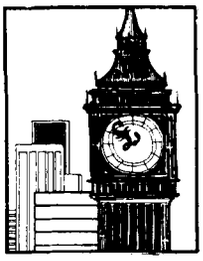


Peter Kellner, Political Editor

How to spot the end of the slump

On Wednesday of this week, Terry Burns, the Government's chief economic adviser, took part in a special Cabinet meeting to discuss the economy. If he has half the guts I think he has, this is roughly what he said.

WHEN I SPOKE to you last July I told you that money supply was under control. Having got that all wrong, I suppose I am bound to be rather cautious today answering the question you all want to ask: is the recession bottoming out? But I am not simply being cautious when I tell you that I frankly haven't a clue.

My best guess is that some signs will soon start appearing to show that the tide is turning — the industrial production figures to be published this afternoon are a case in point — but we will have no idea until at least the middle of next year whether it adds up to a sustained recovery or a brief respite from a continuing decline. If the first prognosis proves right, most Keynesian economists ought to jack in their trade; if the second prognosis proves right, you ought to jack in yours.

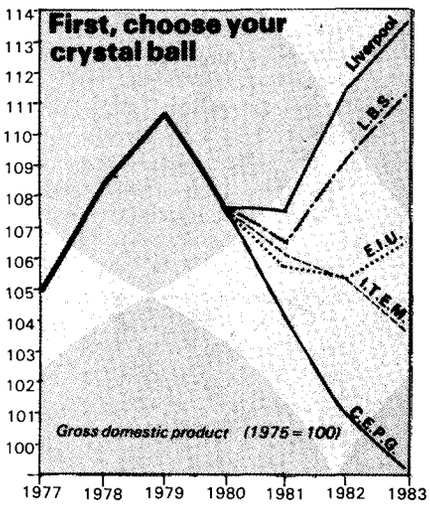
To estimate the direction the economy will take, we first need to know where it now is. In truth, we only have a rough idea of where it has been in the last year, let alone where it has now got to. You see, we base our forecasts on the available information about the recent behaviour of the economy — and that information often turns out to be wrong.

For example, forecasts made in the spring of 1980 — and they generally failed to predict the viciousness of the current recession, as measured by the dole queues — were based on gross domestic product estimates for 1979 that were £3 billion adrift. We now know (or think we know) that GDP in 1979 was 1½ per cent higher than we originally thought. We may be equally wrong today about 1980's GDP.

If only you knew, you would be appalled at how much rewriting of recent economic history gets done. Take the last Tory government. It began with a mild recession, which was reversed by the 'Barber boom'. At some point the recession bottomed out — but years later government economists were changing their minds as to just when. In 1975, they thought the turning point was March 1971. In 1977 they reckoned that the economy didn't start to pick up until October 1971. Now we calculate that the slide continued until February 1972. So if you want me to tell you whether the present recession is bottoming out around now, ask me again -- in ten years' time.

IT IS NOT just a question of revising figures for economic output. The troughs and peaks of economic cycles are difficult things to define, even with perfect statistics. Since much of the optimism your speechwriters inject in your speeches these days derives from movements in the Government's leading cyclical indicators — which are supposed to anticipate troughs and peaks in output — it is worth spending just a moment on why they cause trouble.

What the Government's statisticians do is collect data that, historically, have anticipated changes in output — things like share prices, and business optimism as measured by the CBI. To turn the raw figures into economic predictions, the statisticians remove 'trend' changes — that is, the changes you would expect to occur if the economy grew steadily, without any troughs or peaks. What is left after eliminating trend changes (and trying to iron out very short-term aberrations) should be cyclical changes.



In descending order of optimism, the forecasts shown here were prepared by the Liverpool Research Group in Macroeconomics, March; London Business School, February; Economist Intelligence Unit for St James's Group, June; Independent Treasury Economic Model Club, April; Cambridge Economic Policy Group, April.

Unfortunately, you can't be sure for some years what the trend line is. It's rather like assessing a football team that has just won three games in a row: is it performing briefly better than usual (that is, above trend) or has it become a better team (with the trend line changing)? Your guess at the time may well be different from your verdict at the end of the season.

The trend-line problem is especially acute with the present recession. If you assume the underlying trends in the economy have not changed much, your cyclical indicators will say one thing; if you believe the economy has fundamentally changed course, the indicators will say another.

THE OTHER main technique for deducing the future from the past is to construct a forecasting model. But at the moment, as the chart shows, they are all over the place.

Liverpool and the London Business School see the recession bottoming out this year, the Economist Intelligence Unit expects it to bottom out next year, ITEM thinks the turn-round will be delayed until 1983, and Cambridge anticipates no recovery at all on present policies.

Liverpool predicts a six per cent rise in GDP between 1980 and 1983; Cambridge, on the other hand, predicts an eight per cent fall — a difference between the two groups of no less than *thirty billion pounds* (in 1981 prices) in national output in 1983. Now there are people who think both the Liverpool and Cambridge teams are more than a little dotty. But, if I were you, I would be cautious about dismissing Cambridge's pessimism out of hand. Here is something the Cambridge people wrote almost four years ago, assessing the medium-term consequences of the restrictive policies first introduced by Denis Healey after the IMF crisis and revived by Sir Geoffrey Howe:

> In the short run it is likely to produce some superficially attractive results — moderation in the rate of inflation and rapid improvement in the current balance of payments as continuing domestic recession coincides with the build-up of North Sea oil production. Yet all the while the competitive position of British industry is being allowed to deteriorate further, and unemployment will continue to rise, probably to over two million by 1981.*

At the time many of us thought that was arrant nonsense. Who dares to dismiss the Cambridge team as fruitcakes now?

If economics were a wholly objective science it should be possible to resolve the differences among the forecasters independently of ideology — rather as the West and the East co-operate in weather forecasting techniques: there is no distinctively 'communist' or 'capitalist' way of interpreting sunshine or rainfall statistics.

But economic forecasts differ largely because ideology cannot be removed — or at least has not been removed — from debate. The spread of pessimism to optimism portrayed in the chart almost exactly reflects the ideological starting point of the forecasters — from the unreconstructed Keynesianism of the Cambridge team, through the semi-Keynesian ITEM and EIU operations, to the semi-monetarist London Business School, and finally the out-and-out monetarists at Liverpool.

As I came from the London Business School, and played a large part in devising its present forecasting methods, I naturally think your policies are about right. But honesty compels me to admit that you and I may be horribly wrong. And the really nasty bit is this. You want to win the next election. If we are all wrong, you will want to reflate the economy in time to have some effect on unemployment. But you will have to take that decision before you can be certain whether your strategy has succeeded or failed. If you wait until all the facts are in, it will be too late. And don't tell me then that you weren't warned.

*Reprinted in *Demand Management* edited by Michael Posner, published by Heinemann and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, 1978.

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UNITED STATES

Ronald Reagan's Kitchen Cabinet

The men who paid the bills on the way to the White House expect to wield the power they have purchased. CLAUDIA WRIGHT reports

A MAN WHOSE DIM film career led to greater renown advertising vacuum cleaners, electric toasters and Borax could not have grasped Presidential power without a great deal of help and money. The men who turned his meagre assets into a multi-million dollar fortune gave him legal and tax advice and helped pay for his campaigns, paid for the celebration when the victory was won and then — inevitably —demanded their economic and ideological payoff.

This group of men, 13 by most counts,* make up President Reagan's Kitchen Cabinet. The term has been loosely applied to informal Presidential friends and advisers in the past, but never before has such a group been so cohesive, so formally organised, and so endowed with the authority of the President to make decisions on his behalf and to impose their fanatical ideas on the country.

In his inaugural address last January, Reagan celebrated individuals whose 'voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art and education. Their patriotism is quiet but deep. Their values sustain our national life.' If Reagan's rhetorical sentiments appear to confuse the public institution of the Presidency with the private profit to be made out of the White House, that is a risk the Kitchen Cabinet is willing to take.

Just what they intend doing, and how, can be gauged from the remarkably consistent pattern of interests, policies and obsessions each and all have demonstrated in the past. The Kitchen Cabinet is, first of all, a group of old men, educated (like Reagan) at relatively small schools and colleges (apart from Smith who went to Harvard) just before or during the depression. Though a few (Bloomingdale, Coors — see *Who's Who*) inherited money, most had to earn theirs and formed an early and unshakeable belief in the virtues of free enterprise capitalism.

In point of fact, their careers and immense personal fortunes all reflect the peculiar economies of a parochial corner of the Western and Southwestern United States, whose almost unbroken boom since the 1930s has been based on federal and state subsidies, and other forms of government intervention, which the Kitchen Cabinet has sworn to eliminate.

The region of California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and Colorado, where the Kitchen Cabinet lives and works, has been a unique experiment in government intervention and state socialism, from the initial 'liberation' of the land from Mexico and Spain, to the massive government payments for irrigation, drinking water, agricultural research and energy that turned the desert into rich farming land in the early years of the century. As western movie fans may remember, federal and state government laws and regulations provided farmers with protection for their homesteads, controlled railroad charges to ensure cheap access to markets, and introduced some of the toughest restrictions on unions in the country which, combined with Asian and Mexican immigration, provided cheap labour.

After the Second World War, when farming gave way to defence and aerospace industry, and rural communities lost their land to the spread of cities like Los Angeles, the federal government paid for their highways, contracted for the aeroplanes and armaments, subsidised the sewerage systems, paid to clean the air, kept petrol, gas, and electricity cheap, and allowed housing and land to multiply in value without incurring taxation. The Kitchen Cabinet grew up in an economy whose land, labour and capital were the gift of the government in Washington, and whose boom would have collapsed without the Welfare State.

EACH OF THE Kitchen Cabinet has milked the state in his own way. Charles Wick's nursing homes and hospitals depend on federal medical insurance payments through Medicaid for the cash their elderly patients pay. Real estate speculators like Wilson, Wrather, Smith and Bloomingdale, Terra the art collector, and oilmen like Salvatori have been able to make, pocket and reinvest vast profits because of the complex and generous federal tax code that permits tax shelters, oil depletion allowances, charitable deductions, and book-keeping manipulation to protect their income from the Treasury.

Economically, the Kitchen Cabinet likes to do business within the family, and regards business as a family matter. So long as the government is confined to contributing cash or other resources to the inflow side of their books, they are content. But if the government imposes costs or charges interest, the family arranges political campaigns to ensure at the state capital in Sacramento or in Washington that there is adequate political protection from levies. That has been Ronald Reagan's job as Governor of California and now as President.

William French Smith abhors federal government expenditures on public housing and subsidies for public bus and train services, but he owns at least $30,000 in urban renewal and redevelopment bonds, issued to help pay for such purposes, whose interest he accumulates without regular taxation. Joseph Coors opposed government subsidisation of interest rates for credit co-operatives, and rails against rising national debt. But he had no qualms authorising his company to lend at least $4 million to a network of family trusts enabling them to pay off estate and inheritance taxes for the younger generation of Coors — at nil interest. A public stock prospectus for the Coors Brewery even admits that the company makes its funds available as interest-free loans to the Coors family 'for personal emergencies and customary expense account advances' — in short, for the shopping.

The *Who's Who* listings indicate close concentration of economic interests in farm-

Keystone

It beats selling Borax any day

*The number of members varies in press reports because the memory of the members is not what it used to be. The 13 identified here are confirmed by one of the longest-serving members, Henry Salvatori (see *Who's Who*). He recalls seeing Mrs Anne Armstrong, a former US Ambassador to Britain, at recent meetings, but she is omitted from other lists. Walter Annenberg, a millionaire publisher and also ex-Ambassador to Britain, is said to be a member by some, but not by others. So is Hal Wallis, a film producer. If mere political giveaways were enough to qualify, Annenberg couldn't fail to belong. He gave $250,000 to President Nixon in 1972, and $95,000 to Mrs Reagan's for redecorating at the White House.

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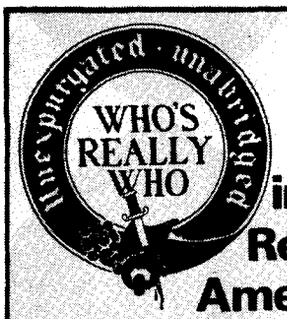
ing, food production, real estate speculation, oil, chemicals and movies, but the extent of the Kitchen Cabinet's financial inter-relationships is extraordinary. Smith invests in Jorgensen's company and serves on the Jorgensen board. He is also a stockholder in Litton Industries, into which Salvatori merged his Western Geophysical which explores for oil and gas. Southern California Gas — a subsidiary of an outfit called Pacific Lighting — has large stakes in Western Geophysical. Smith is a director, attorney and stockholder of Pacific Lighting. He is also a rancher with Wilson, and a legal adviser to the California Brewers' Association, of which Coors Brewery is the second largest member. Wrather owns television and radio companies which screen films in which Bloomingdale and Wick have interests. Dart's companies depend on the oil industry for feedstocks, on California farms for food products to process, and on the media companies to advertise their products. Advertising, from which Wrather's fortune comes, is the key to food company profits and Coors and Dart would be poor men without it.

They even share interests in their womenfolk — Mary Jane Wick, Jane Dart, and Bonita Wrather were all minor film actresses, whose accquaintance with Nancy Reagan led their husbands initially to friendship with Ronald. For serious socialising, though, the group appears to prefer all-male company. A retired San Francisco brothel madam named Brandy Baldwin alleges that the Bohemian Club, to which many of the group (including the President) belong, enjoys homosexual and transvestite frolics at its rural hideaway, as well as the occasional heterosexual gangbang for which she claims to have supplied the girls. With two or three children on average per marriage — the men of the private White House have kept a firm contraceptive leash on their women. Discipline in the bedroom is now difficult for men well past their prime; it is only to be expected they would regard the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion as unnecessarily liberating for women and economically damaging for the supply of generations of poor labourers to which they look forward.

WITH SUCH a strong family ethos, the Kitchen Cabinet gets irritable when outsiders accuse them of collusion and conflict of interest. In one lawsuit, under way since September 1979, Smith and Wilson have been identified, as members of the University of California Board of Regents, as having cast their votes to channel millions of dollars of federal, state and university funds into agricultural research that directly benefits the interests of the agribusiness corporations from which they and their pals profit. The university's research includes the breeding of vegetable and fruit varieties that can easily be harvested by machines, and the development of harvesters that can replace most of the workers currently employed in the fields, and undercut the livelihood of the small farmers. In August 1980, the Carter administration decided to stop paying for this type of research.

Smith and Wilson, like the rest of the group, are eager to destroy their enemies and silence public criticism. In 1979, before



in Reagan's America

BLOOMINGDALE, Alfred. Scion of the New York department-store family, born in 1916. A founder of Diner's Club; has large real-estate investments in Florida, California and Georgia. His wife, Betsy, is one of Nancy Reagan's closest friends. Bloomingdale hoped to become US Ambassador in Paris; blocked when it was found that his wife had been convicted in 1975 on charges of having failed to declare to US Customs tens of thousands of dollars worth of Paris couture clothing. (She cut out the labels in attempt to avoid detection.)

Bloomingdale gave $10,000 to Mrs Reagan's fund for restoring the White House upstairs. He is a Knight Commander of St Gregor, and a member of the academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences.

CAMPBELL, W. Glenn. Economist & academic, b. 1924. Director, Hoover Institution on War, Revolutuion & Peace: right-wing endowment at Stanford, Cal. from which numerous Reagan policy advisers recruited. Co-author, *The American Enterprise Economy* (1952); Reagan appointee to U. of Calif. Regents; adviser, American Enterprise Institute; member, Committee on the Present Danger. Member, Bohemian Club, San Francisco (see text).

COORS, Joseph. Brewer & anti-union crusader. President, Adolph Coors Co, Golden, Colorado, one of the largest US breweries. Appointed Reagan's personal envoy to Australia-America Week, May 1981. Active patron of numerous conservative causes: Young Americans for Freedom; Heritage Foundation; American Conservative Union; Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress; National Association of Manufacturers & its offshoot, the Council for a Union-Free Environment.

Coors Co has been locked in strike & boycott action by AFL-CIO since 1977: this has cut Californian market-share from 37 to 18 per cent: plans have been made to smuggle in Irish beer.

Coors contributes to the John Birch Society, and is chairman of the Mountain States Legal Federation, an anti-environmentalist group. He is the financial backer of Sen. Steven Symms, the former Bircher who won Idaho in 1980. His family and company have been sued for most forms of corporate abuse: union-busting, monopoly practices, price-fixing, racial discrimination in hiring, occupational hazards at plants, environmental pollution, etc.

CUMMINS, Theodore. Chain-store proprietor & real-estate speculator, b. 1909. Former chairman, Vornado Corporation. Gave $46,407 to 1972 Nixon campaign just before Watergate scandal ended unlimited political donations. Appointed by Reagan as Ambassador to Austria.

DART, Justin. Drugstore operator & political fixer, b. 1908. Original Dart drugstore chain expanded into pharmaceuticals, plastics (Tupperware), cosmetics and (since 1980 merger with Kraft) food products. Dart tangled with Justice Dept (qv Smith) over conspiracy to fix prices of quinine (1978); for dumping hazardous chemical waste (1980); and potential restraint of trade in the Kraft merger.

Director, United Airlines. Member, Bohemian Club. Gave $25,993 to Nixon, 1972; gave $10,000 to refurbish Reagan White House. Sponsored & co-directed (qv Wick) Coalition for a New Beginning, a moneybags group which raised $50,000 donations to pay for 'non-partisan' (hence legal) media campaign to back Reagan budget cuts. Complaints of political

extortion led to cancellation of scheme, & alleged return of money.

JORGENSEN, Earle. Rags-to-riches Los Angeles businessman; founder of steel & aluminium firm, which defeated 1978 attempts at organisation by steelworkers' union. Accused by unions of firing injured employees to avoid accident compensation lawsuits. Gave Nixon $25,000 in 1972. His wife added $25,000 for Reagan White House. Trustee of California Institute of Technology: reported to have been prime mover in selling Reagan on proposition that Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory should intercept Halley's Comet in 1986 (project scrapped by Carter as wasteful).

SALVATORI, Henry. Oilman, originally a geophysicist. Established Western Geophysical, now owned by Litton Industries, one of the world's largest oil-search & seismic-exploration groups. Also owned 'as a sideline' Grant Oil Tool Co of Los Angeles. Now operates oil production leases in S. Calif. & Louisiana. Claims distinction of participating in Nixon's first election-finance scandal & Congressional campaign, 1948. Chairman of Calif. Goldwater campaign 1964 when he claimed to have 'realised Reagan gave the Goldwater speech better than Goldwater'. Gave $99,415 to Nixon in 1972 and backed Spiro Agnew when he was exposed as corrupt. Donated $10,000 to White House fund.

SMITH, William French. Tax lawyer, b. 1918. Partner in Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, one of principal Western law firms: Reagan's personal lawyer, and now US Attorney-General. Member, Bohemian Club, General Society of

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an Arizona citrus producer called Blue Goose Growers was sold off by Pacific Lighting, Smith was a director and legal adviser for the company in a bitter legal battle to prosecute civil rights and farm labour organisations who had uncovered legal irregularities in the ownership of the company, and in systematic exploitation of field workers, most of them undocumented (illegal) Mexican immigrants.

Indeed, Blue Goose tried to have its critics *imprisoned* — on a charge of criminal contempt of court — for what was essentially their critics' exercise of free speech in the local press. The prosecution was eventually thrown out of court.

Coors is accused by the trade union federation AFL-CIO of breaking at least 17 different unions at his breweries. His employment practices include requiring workers to submit to lie detector tests when answering questions on their political beliefs and sexual preferences. A strike at Coors brewery in Colorado in 1977 escalated into a nationwide boycott of Coors beer which is still in effect. Dart and Jorgensen have also waged battles against unions in their companies.

Tax avoidance is another obsession of the Kitchen Cabinet. It has been customary for Presidential candidates since the Kennedy-Nixon race of 1960 to make a public show of paying substantial income taxes and Ronald Reagan pays a sizeable sum these days. But for at least three years when he was Governor of California he paid an average of only $1,000 in tax on personal earnings of more than $50,000 a year. Smith is the genius who sees this is always legal.

Smith also helped mastermind one of the largest tax-cheating schemes in Californian history. Southern California Gas Company, the largest gas producer in the US and one of the subsidiaries of Pacific Lighting, is permitted by the State Utilities Commission to add into the rates charged to gas consumers an amount representing the company's estimate of its federal tax liability. For a five-year period in the 1970s, it collected $62 million from consumers but paid the federal government only $3 million. The rest stayed in the company's coffers or was paid to the stockholders.

These men are not political sophisticates. 'I don't read much,' Wilson says. 'None of us do. None of us are really that political-minded. Most of just play tennis, ride horseback.' Salvatori describes his political philosophy in these terms: 'I'm one of those fellas who recognised the communist threat at the time of the founding of the UN in San Francisco. The world is at a crossroads. Western civilisation versus another civilisation. For us it is as if Hannibal is going to conquer Rome.' William Coors, who is Joe's brother and a frequent spokesman for the family and the brewery, believes that 'The forces pushing the US society away from the free market system are forces largely inspired and sometimes financed by communists.' He remembers that Joseph McCarthy 'saw a communist under every bush' and comments: 'He was right.'

BECAUSE Reagan is so used to consulting the group and doing what they tell him, the Kitchen Cabinet has exercised a delegated authority that no modern President has ever before given to his backers and friends. What can one expect, suggests Gore Vidal, who may run against the Reaganites for the Senate seat in California in 1983, of a man so used to being directed on film sets that he can be moved around like a piece of furniture or a prop?

At first, the group met at Smith's law offices in Los Angeles or on Wilson's ranch. As soon as Reagan was inaugurated they were given their own suite in the Executive Office Building next door to the White House, with special passes to move in and out like regular staff appointees. In February Wilson began to boast to the press about his official status, and reporters' queries led Edwin Meese, Reagan's counsellor, to obtain legal opinions on whether private citizens might lawfully occupy government offices. Coors produced his own brief to say they could; but Meese decided that the press had created more heat in the kitchen than the Cabinet could stand — and they moved out. The White House refuses to say whether the special passes have been withdrawn.

The change of premises has not, however,

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Mayflower Descendants and Sons of the American Revolution. Appointed by Reagan to U. of Calif. Regents, and now the target of major lawsuits (see text above). Gave $10,000 to Nixon slush fund. Director of powerful California corporations: Pacific Lighting, Crocker National Bank, Pacific Mutual Life, Pacific Telephone & Telegraph. Former director, Blue Goose Growers (see above). Also director, Jorgensen Steel (qv). 1980 income from law practice & directors' fees disclosed as $439,702. Jointly owns citrus orchard with Wilson (qv), and has substantial mining & agribusiness investments (several left undisclosed when filing interests for accession to Regency). Approximately $1 million in real estate partnerships. Connected with South Africa via ranch partnership with Oppenheimer Industries (sold 1980), and stock in DeBeers Consolidated Mines.

TERRA, Daniel. Investment banker, b. 1912. Chairman Lawter Chemicals, Chicago-based maker of printing materials, resins & pigments. Appointed by Reagan as 'Ambassador-at-large for Cultural Affairs', a 'liaison point' between State Dept. & International Communications Agency (qv Wick) to 'ensure harmonisation with foreign-policy objectives'. Avid collector of American art, and of Republican politicians: gave Nixon $250,000 in 1972 and gave citizens of Evanston, Illinois the Terra Museum of American Art, which specialises in 19th-century American Impressionists. Refused to explain the tax benefits realised on his substantial income through gifts of art works to museum. Disclosure document required by Ethics in Govt. Act (which Smith, qv, proposes to amend) lists 1980 salary & directors' fees of $303,056 and several million dollars in corporate stock, Florida & Illinois land, state bonds, miscellaneous art works & cash. Director Bank Holding Co (steel producer) & Stewart-Warner Corp (aircraft, automobiles & marine instruments, plus military electronics). Offered to resign from ITT Research Institute on confirmation by Senate.

TUTTLE, Holmes. Has held Ford franchise in LA for over 50 years, and was with Smith (qv) an original Reagan backer. Gave Nixon $25,000 in 1972 and Mrs Reagan $10,000 this year. Said in 1974 that 80 per cent of his time since 1965 had been spent in political work for Reagan's California administration, describing Reagan as 'a man of integrity & principle . . . not afraid to make a decision regardless of the political consequences'.

WICK, Charles. Former Hollywood agent, music arranger & producer ('Snow White & the Three Stooges'): invested his earnings in convalescent & old-age hospital, housing projects for the elderly, land speculation & money-market & commodities speculation. Public dossier reveals 1980 salary or partnership income of $196,783; also reveals speculation in gold, Deutschmarks, copper, sugar, pork bellies, US Treasury bills, soybeans, wheat & corn. Appointed in March as director of International Communications Agency, controlling Voice of America, Radio Liberty, Radio Free Europe, etc. Co-chairman, Reagan Inaugural Committee; accused of taking tickets from campaign workers to hand out to friends & big donors. With Dart (qv) began the Coalition for a New Beginning. Reported in *Newsday* to have said to donors that 'if they didn't come up with the $50,000 . . . then the administration wouldn't be their friend.' Said in his maiden speech, at reception for Mrs Sadat: 'If more government heads looked like you, we'd have no problems in the area (Middle East)'.

WILSON, William. Mechanical engineer, b. 1914. Reagan's personal envoy to the Vatican. President of Web Wilson Oil Tools to 1960. Appointed by Reagan to U. of Calif. Regents. Resisted disclosure, but compelled to file by 1980 court order: showing stock in San Vicente Investments Inc, Cerro Colorado Inc and Seaward Arms Co, along with a real estate partnership & other land holdings (reputed he shares Mexican oil leases with Smith, qv). He is a close friend of Reagan, & manages the President's investments. Director, Jorgensen Steel (qv), and said to have interests in Taiwan, where he frequently visits & extols the 'democratic virtues' found there. Advocates tight restraint on free speech of university students, saying 'We have a set of rules, and if they don't like it they should go elsewhere'. Accused American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of having 'Communist or Marxist connections', and said in 1980 that ACLU was 'supported by those whom they are in turn helping, namely organised crime.' Edwin Meese, Presidential Counsel, has since followed this up with allegation that ACLU is a 'criminals' lobby'.

WRATHER, Jack. Oilman, film producer etc, b. 1918. Owns radio & TV stations in San Diego, Tulsa & New York. *Lassie* & *The Lone Ranger* among his best-known productions. Board chairman, Muzak Inc, and director, Teleprompter Inc, which interest was object of Securities & Exchange Commission investigation in 1973 because of misleading reports. Named in 1974 lawsuit for allegedly taking advantage of inside information to sell $8 million of company stock. Teleprompter lawyers said that was a 'fruitless attempt at blackmail', and the case was settled without admission of liability. Another suit claims that Wrather's board acted rashly in agreeing to accept Westinghouse Corp offer which undervalued the stock price. Wrather gave $84,060 in Nixon's campaign and $10,000 to Mrs Reagan's White House. Club memberships in Dallas, Bahamas, New York & London (Marks, Buck's, White Elephant).

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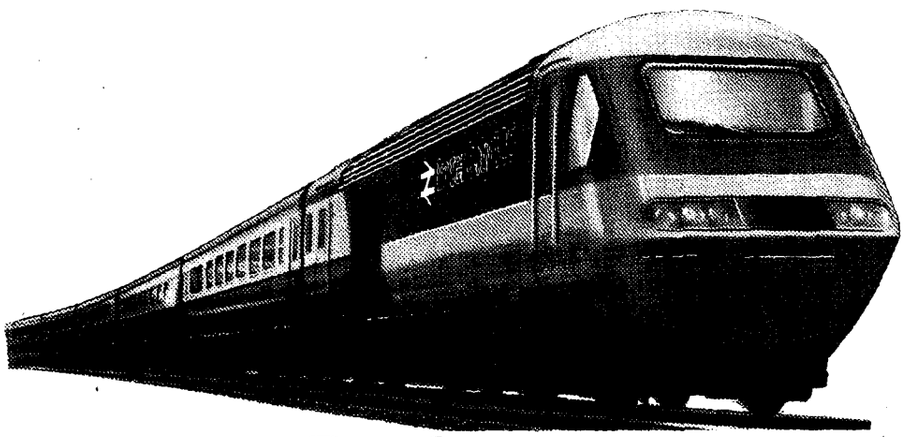

In theory, a monopoly has no competition...

It's true that British Rail operates the only national railway system in the country. By definition, that should make us a monopoly.

By implication, we should therefore enjoy a cosy existence, sheltered from competition, insensitive to customers' needs, complacent and unadventurous.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

COMPETITION IN EVERY SECTOR

On the passenger side intense competition comes from over 19 million private and company cars owned in this country. Owners who use their cars on business benefit from tax relief. And company car owners (of which Britain has more than anywhere else in Europe) usually have only to find marginal costs, like petrol, out of their own pockets. Not surprisingly, the incentive to use the car is considerable.

Air services provide vigorous competition for British Rail's Inter-City trains.

With the passing of the 1980 Transport Act, long-distance coaches now compete for our business much more actively than before.

In the freight sector, competition is similarly intense. We don't benefit, as road hauliers do, from the UK licensing laws – for example, there is no "quantity" licensing, as in Germany and France, to limit the amount of freight to travel by road. What's more, only now is taxation of heavy goods vehicles being increased to make the competitive framework fairer.

FINANCIAL BURDENS – WHAT ABOUT FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY?

We have a statutory obligation to run services which are socially necessary but financially unviable. This is known as the Public Service Obligation – the basis of the annual "contract" between the Government and British Rail. In real terms this has not increased since 1975 – leaving Britain with the least supported major railway in Europe.

If British Rail does not use up the whole of the contract payment in any year the residue cannot be "credited" to the next year.

Monopolies generally enjoy more financial flexibility – and muscle – than other business. But not British Rail. Instead British Rail is restricted by the rules and conventions which apply throughout the UK public sector where, for example, each industry has its External Financing Limit. This represents the maximum sum in terms of "outside finance" that any public sector industry can call on each year. If the economic recession makes it impossible for British Rail to keep within its External Financing Limit, the excess will be deducted from the next year's Limit.

THE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS

The direct consequence of financial inflexibility is on investment. British Rail's investment per train/Km is lower than that of any other major railway in Western Europe. The railway network needs 30 per cent extra investment just to maintain the present standard of service.

If Britain wants a worthwhile railway system in future, people will have to appreciate the importance of railways, as they have done in other countries.

Investment in the railways is a sound and sensible use of money. This so-called monopoly *can* behave adventurously, *can* stand up to competition and *can* justify its role in the economy.

Do not forget that in 1979 British Rail's recorded passenger miles were actually higher than in 1961, when the rail network was thirty per cent larger and there were only half as many cars on the road.

This is one of a series of advertisements designed to increase public awareness of the position of the railways in the national transport system and also in the life of the community as a whole. Whilst the facts and figures contained in these advertisements are known and appreciated by those directly concerned in shaping the future, an industry as much in the limelight as ours has a duty to address itself to a wider audience, which needs to be well informed if it is to play its part in helping to form public opinion.

So much for theory.

This is the age of the train

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detracted from the power the group has been able to exercise. Reagan empowered them for a start to provide lists of candidates for official appointments and required his other personnel officials (as well as regular Cabinet secretaries) to clear their choices with the Kitchen Cabinet first. Bloomingdale described the job as 'surrounding Ronnie with the best people — the ones we'd hire for our own businesses.'

Wrather, Coors and Dart have all had trouble with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Result: new chairman appointed, one John S. Chad, an executive from a large brokerage house committed to lifting the 'disclosure burden' and softening the regulatory enforcement of his agency.

The Kitchen Cabinet has other policy weapons too. Budget cuts have stripped the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the National Labour Relations Board, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Legal Services Corporation of money and personnel to do their jobs. A newly established Regulatory Policy Group in the Office of Management and Budget is assigned to strip them of their regulatory powers. California Rural Legal Assistance, the San Francisco group that is suing Smith, Wilson and the California Board of Regents, is targeted to lose all its federal grants.

If this is abuse of power, it will nevertheless be legal, because William French Smith is the Attorney-General. In that position, he will relieve Dart's anxieties about anti-trust proceedings, and give Coors, whose company has repeatedly been found guilty in court of monopoly practices and price-fixing, new room for manoeuvre.

But Smith has developed a payoff for his friends that has the tequila glasses clinking from Los Angeles to Acapulco. This is a scheme, formally drafted by a Reagan administration task force on immigration and refugee policy, to permit half a million Mexican 'guest workers' to enter the United States each year for work. Reagan and President Lopez Portillo of Mexico will discuss the details at their meeting in Washington this month. Until the Federal Department of Agriculture resumes financing the mechanisation of agriculture and so eliminates farm labour altogether, this plan will prevent the United Farm Workers' Union from achieving any further gains in wages or conditions. When Smith was a director of Blue Goose Growers, the company's labour camps had no housing — men slept on the open ground — no sanitation, no safe drinking water, no honest system of piecework payment. Now that he's on the board of the United States Government and his client is the President, Smith will have the country operating with the same economic ruthlessness. □

SOMETHING YOU OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT

The pressures of modern life tend to distract our attention from fundamental realities. There is a spiritual basis to life which many of us are now ignoring at the cost of our happiness and security. There are some eternal verities behind the teachings of all religions. In your own interest, learn something about these from THEOSOPHY, the Ageless Wisdom Religion.

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EDUCATION

Racist schools or poor homes?

MIKE PHILLIPS on the official enquiry into 'why blacks fail'

THE RAMPTON COMMITTEE, which was set up by the last government to enquire into the problems of immigrants in the British education system, has now produced an interim report on the education of West Indian children. But the course of the enquiry has been dogged by a number of problems, not least of which has been the sacking of its original chairman, Anthony Rampton, for 'administrative' incompetence. Rampton, who had a long history of involvement in race relations issues, through such bodies as the Runnymede Trust, has now been replaced by a less 'sensitive' (to quote *The Times*) chairman, ex-BBC boss Lord Swann.

Rumour has it that it was due to Rampton's 'sensitivity' that the committee has managed to produce a list of recommendations which will be at least controversial in the world of education, and about which the DES and the Education Secretary Mark Carlisle are alleged to be expressing a high degree of doubt and irritation. The report points to three possible explanations for the poor performance of West Indian children in British schools: first, the 'scientific racism' theories as expounded by Jensen and Eysenck; secondly, the nature/nurture arguments, which suggest that the home life of West Indian children, together with their general background and linguistic habits are primarily responsible; and thirdly, arguments which suggest that British schools are racially biased institutions and that teacher attitudes and expectations play a fundamental part in determining the performance of West Indian children.

The report comes out firmly in favour of the last conclusion, and its recommendations are in favour of revising examinations and syllabuses to reflect the multi-racial nature of the school population, building a multi-racial element into all teacher training, expanding in-service training for teachers and heads on West Indian language and culture, revising the system of educational advisers and appointing advisers with proven knowledge and commitment to multi-racial education, and monitoring the results of careers teachers' work with West Indian pupils. Two of the most important recommendations, which are also likely to be the most controversial, are concerned with the collection of racial statistics, about both teachers and pupils. At the moment only two authorities, Coventry and Bradford, keep statistics about race in the education system. The report argues that monitoring progress is impossible without them. The other item which may cause serious controversy is the recommendation about Section 11 of the Local Government Act of 1966. Section 11 allocates funds to local authorities which have special difficulties in providing facilities for ethnic minorities, and in 1978 the Home Office circulated an Advice Note warning that local authorities were using Section 11 funds for a variety of purposes, from which the ethnic minorities themselves failed to benefit. Rampton's recommendation is to restore community control, by means of black and Asian community monitoring, over Section 11 funds, with the goal of having any money granted under the Act go directly to ethnic minority projects or facilities.

THE CONTROVERSIES started well before the release of the report. One member, Mike Feeley, a multi-racial adviser in Coventry, resigned last year after it was alleged that he had broken confidentiality by attacking the Afro Asian Teachers' Association's evidence to Rampton, at a meeting of the Coventry Community Relations Council. Four committee members resigned with Rampton last month. The committee had been arguing out the balance between the nature/nurture and the racism arguments, and the protagonists of the 'nurture' argument, Jim Rose and Eric Hawkins, were among those who resigned — allegedly after losing the argument. Even before the assembly of the final draft of the report, the penultimate draft had been leaked, notably to Diana Geddes of *The Times*, who wrote a series of articles defending the 'nurture' argument and weighting the debate in favour of the contention that West Indian family life and language habits were at the root of West Indian children's problems at school.

Remaining committee members are said to believe that the leaks were an attempt to discredit the final draft in advance, and they are also said to believe that the singling out of the West Indian members in *The Times* report, together with such emotive headlines as 'Rampton blames teachers' (*TES*), are part of the same strategy, which reflects the DES's and the minister's distaste for the argument that racial bias is the key to West Indian children's educational problems.

Meanwhile Lord Swann is about to move the committee on to the next stage of its work, which is concerned with the education of Asian children. One of the notable omissions from the report was the lack of any analysis of the way racial attitudes are based on different views of different minorities, a fact which makes redundant the comparisons between Asians and West Indians, which the DES is said to have wanted included.

Swann's job,'committee watchers claim, is to pull the debate back from the present inclination to arguments about racism and restore a 'balance' between these and arguments about the 'social deprivation' of West Indians. This is precisely the battle which West Indian members of the committee, backed by a majority of white members, won during the rule of the last chairman, and which they are now gearing themselves up to fight again. □

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POLAND

Final days?

GUSTAW MOSZCZ reveals that the Soviet Union has now set the Polish reformers a deadline: change course by August, or face invasion.

THERE IS NOW less than a month before the Polish Communist Party congress. If, as seems likely, the congress is composed of delegates elected by popular choice, insisting on major economic and political revision — which will forfeit, inevitably,the party's right to final decision and control — then Moscow will be presented with a *fait accompli*.

Viewed pragmatically, a reformed party, with support from Solidarity, ratified by congress, poses insuperable problems for the USSR. It is a difficult task to crush a dismembered, unorganised party of the sort which exists at present. But it would be much harder to crush a reformed party of the sort which is likely to come into existence if Poland's inviolability endures till August.

This is the real context of the letter sent by the Soviet party to the Polish Central Committee: most likely, its significance will come to be seen as the first move in an *escalation* of Moscow's anti-reformist campaign. And it gives the first clear indication of a deadline, when it says that

> The (Polish) Party can and must find the strength to master the tide of events, *before the congress*, and direct its forces in a proper way. (Italics added)

Moscow's options, since last August, have been either to accept the reforms in Poland and make the best of a bad job, or to assemble a range of devices which can prevent them taking effort. Predictably, pragmatism has dominated the Kremlin's policies so far, and will continue to do so: ideology is not the concern, but loss of a colony, a trading partner and a military buffer against Western Europe.

Moscow has therefore followed a policy of support for the 'workers' demands' in Poland, combined with condemnation of the means used to meet the demands. No devilish political machinations here, but the rather obvious tactic of waiting until the last possible moment. That moment is now approaching.

THE HESITANCY which the USSR has shown so far occurs because the Polish case isn't analogous to previous East European independence movements. Given that the Communist lower echelons work together with Solidarity's majority on major issues, Moscow is faced by the class it purportedly defends, and the party which theoretically acts on its behalf, united behind a series of demands whch call for self-determination *outside* the control of Soviet management.

The Polish response to the Kremlin's warning letter has been not so much a refusal to pay heed as the institution of more half-measures — sack a few officials, repeat that Poland is 'on the verge of catastrophe', and march reluctantly on. Some commentators (eg Jonathan Steele of the *Guardian*) see Moscow as having no option but to permit the congress, and hope to claw back lost ground in a few years time.

But this ignores the existence of many Solidarity-type movements *inside* the USSR, and the impetus they would gain from Poland's example. Steele forgets, as others do, the semi-rational premises of Moscow's pragmatic thinking. Poland's geographic location, its military importance and its economic necessity to COMECON all suggest that the USSR, in the end, will have to gamble the high cost of an occupation against the even higher cost of abandoning control.

The cost in lives and money cannot be weighed — except in terms of a rational calculus which Moscow has ignored before —against fear of the loss of power. To permit the establishment of a non-Soviet-style party, allied with an unruly, cross-class pressure group would produce the first real breach in the empire's defences — and we demonstrate our own political naivete if we imagine otherwise. It is impossible to stop the reform process, and equally impossible to avert the drastic response it will bring.

What might that be? Solidarity members have stated to me that an invasion will occur — with consequent deportations to the USSR, starvation of the population into capitulation, eradication of 'terrorist' elements, and the arrest of leading counter-Soviet figures. Moscow would have to risk as many as a million troops, but those troops are replaceable. Once you lose a colony, it's difficult to grab it back. □

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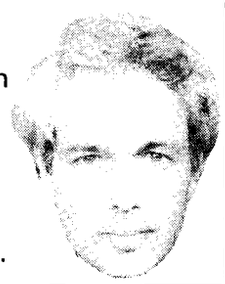
The breakup or rebirth of British Socialism?

Robin Blackburn, with help from Hilary Wainwright and Tariq Ali, replies to last week's piece on Tony Benn.



Despite giving over more than six pages of the *NS* last week (12 June) to the crisis in the Labour Party the combined effect of cover, editorial, and major article remains shallow, tendentious and one-sided.

The assessment of Benn's personal qualities is itself not undertaken in a minimally fair-minded or scrupulous spirit. It should, in any case, have been combined with a proper attempt to identify the issues really at stake in the present re-making of the Labour Party and re-definition of its relationship to the wider labour and socialist movement.

With wilful obtuseness the editorial, and the article by Bruce Page and Peter Kellner, fail to address themselves squarely to the central issue: how is policy itself to be determined and policy implementation to be invigilated? Benn has attracted support chiefly because he has attacked the workings of the old power structure within the labour movement, and accepted the need for proper accountability by office holders and wider participation in the formulation and execution of policy.

After the Wembley conference the media liked to claim that the Bennite Left was boosting the traditional fiat of the trade union bosses. Since Benn declared his candidacy for the deputy leadership it has become clear that the strategy of the Left is exactly the reverse: namely that of involving the active trade unionists more extensively in the politics of the Labour movement, if necessary against the wishes of the General Secretaries. After misrepresenting the approach of Benn's supporters in the T&GWU, Page and Kellner resort to a strange argument by analogy:

> Benn's own metaphor for the wheeling and dealing inside the unions is that his candidacy is acting as a yeast, encouraging a new kind of democracy to ferment. It is difficult to pretend that such fermentation is other than overdue. But as any practitioner knows, a brew that is fermented too quickly and consumed too soon is likely to taste unpleasant, and have some very nasty side effects.

Period, end of article. Page and Kellner may be experts when it comes to judging fermented beverages (while Benn, of course, was referring to bread not a 'brew'), but where exactly does this lead us in assessing the desirability of drawing union activists into Labour Party debates? Is it 'too soon' for this to be done and, if so, for how long should rank and file trade unionists be excluded from Labour's deliberations?

Benn has not only identified himself with a challenge to Labour's political establishment, and its bad old ways, but also radically questioned the workings of the state, with all its secretive and hierarchical features bequeathed to us by latter-day imperialism and the financial and landed aristocracy. The Labour leadership has always displayed the utmost obsequiousness and servility towards the institutions of the British ruling class. Benn has begun to challenge this.

Is he to be disqualified because, as a member of many Labour Cabinets, he is thereby deeply implicated in their misdeeds? Most of those who support Benn are well aware of this aspect of his record and it inspires in them a definite caution and reserve. But they are willing to give him some credit for having identified the problems and for having drawn certain radical conclusions from his own experience as a minister. On occasion Benn did successfully buck the system — over his own peerage and over the EEC referendum.

Most decisively of all Benn earns conditional support because, if successful, he will not be the recipient of any blank cheque but will be committed by responsible safeguards concerning the powers of the leadership. Without even considering this central contention of the Left the *New Statesman* editorial declares that Benn's 'personal qualities and his record as a practical socialist would make him a disastrous party leader or deputy leader.' It seems that this judgment is prompted as much by (unargued) opposition to the changes now under way in the direction of greater party democracy, and reduced parliamentary privilege, as it is by suspicion of Benn's personality and record, which certainly bear comparison with those of most of his parliamentary colleagues.

IN A RARE ATTEMPT to confront the central issues at stake the editorial remarks:

> No party of the left can hope to flourish unless it can combine, in some reasonably free alliance, the three elements of Parliamentary representation, trade union organisation and constituency activism. Those who differ from that view properly belong, on the one side, to organisations of the revolutionary left or, on the other side, to the Social Democrats.

This observation is studiously vague where it should have been precise (What is a 'reasonably free alliance'? Is not one 'ally' meant to be representing the others?) and spuriously specific where it should have been catholic and tolerant.

The campaign against Labour's arbitrary and corrupt system of internal self-government was not led either by Tony Benn or by the organisations of the revolutionary left, but by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, a coalition concerned only with constitutional issues. To insinuate otherwise is to display the political sensibility of knee-jerk 'moderation'. For his part Benn has made clear his differences with the revolutionary left (in the so-called 'Debate of the Decade'). Indeed there is no good reason why socialists of the most various colouration, from cautious reformism to intransigent revolutionism, should not concur in respecting the principles of a socialist democracy, in which the minority would loyally accept majority decisions in the interests of furthering the long-term political capacity of the movement as a whole.

Instead of addressing itself to the genuine problems of democracy and representation the editorial fobs us off with a 'reasonably free alliance'. In the past this has always meant servitude for the constituency activists, irresponsible power for the Parliamentarians, subject to good behaviour as defined by the Front Bench and the intermittent sanction of trade union officialdom.

Too many MPs put up with inappropriate working conditions and unsocial hours because they enjoy a measure of personal power, pleasant club facilities and the tantalising prospect of ministerial office. And, of course, many Labour MPs genuinely believe that the British Parliament is the ultimate embodiment of the democracy for which the labour movement has fought, not to say a perfect instrument for installing socialism. Even when the conduct of MPs is free of any suspicion of mundane political corruption it may be determined not by the policies of the labour movement but by the tenacious Fabian tradition of elitism, technocracy and worship of constituted authority.

The *New Statesman* has discovered a 'left-wing revolt against Benn' — a revolt which is confined, it appears, to the Palace of Westminster. Since MPs' privileges and lack of accountability is one of the main issues, we scarcely need be surprised to witness an anti-Benn revolt from this quarter. To banner it all as 'The Break Up of the British Left' is more than a little ridiculous.

Moreover, we may add to the MPs' natural disposition to defend their traditional prerogatives the fact that the right and centre are greatly over-represented in the parliamentary ranks. Thus, Frank Field is no doubt an honourable, competent and radical politician, but his radicalism is not of the distinctively socialist, anti-capitalist variety. As for Dame Judith Hart and Neil Kinnock, whose opposition to Benn is also paraded before us, how impressed should we be? They certainly represent species of

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LETTERS

Arguments for Tony Benn

Your indictment of Tony Benn (*NS* 12 June) is inaccurate on most counts: here are some of those factual errors which are known to me.

Arguments for Socialism was published in 1979, not 1981. It consists of edited versions of speeches and articles prepared over the preceding decade. The quotation you furnish comes from a pamphlet which we at the IWC published in 1974, before Benn was moved to the Department of Energy in 1975.

It refers to the pre-nationalisation discussions which were initiated precisely in the way he describes. The disgraceful story of Eric Montgomery occurred in 1977, two years after Benn's dismissal from the relevant department. So your article is pretending that Benn gave his support to a framework of institutions against which he has consistently agitated for ten years or more, and your claim can only be supported by misreporting the dates in question. Incidentally, democratic accountability in the nationalised industries is anything but accepted in the PLP and far from 'orthodoxy.'

Second, Benn did not, as you seem to imply, over-rule advisers who wanted to give more money to the Kirkby (KME) co-op. He over-ruled IDAB, the advisory body which was chaired by Sir Robert Clark of Hill, Samuel. IDAB's advice was to give no aid whatever. In spite of this Benn fought the case through strong opposition to win the £3.9m of aid which was actually allocated. Those of us who agitated to increase this and other support given to the new worker co-ops, to more adequate levels, got no help from the *New Statesman* at the time.

The report from Benn which you cite was first published in a book which I edited, called *The New Worker Co-operatives*. There it appeared alongside a detailed account of KME's difficulties, given by Professor Tony Eccles. This gave an accurate account of precisely what advice was offered to, and over-ruled by Tony Benn, and had you consulted it you would neither have made your mistake as to the facts of the case, nor could you have claimed that we there 'made no reference to it.'

Third, Benn's claim during the 1980 Conference that Labour's 1979 Manifesto was amended to rule out 'immediate restriction of the export of capital', 'immediate introduction of a wealth tax', 'substantial cuts in arms expenditure', 'reflation of public sector service spending' and 'the imposition of selective import controls' was in fact far nearer the mark than you admit.

The redesign of the Manifesto took out specific references to 'immediacy', substituting facing-both-ways formulae which had no categorical substance whatever. It made precise proposals vague, and invariably diluted, rather than strengthened, the commitments derived by the NEC draftsmen from Conference decisions. The 'well-informed' left knew about these and seven close-packed columns of other fudges and omissions in the Manifesto because the IWC published them in a brochure, together with articles by Benn and Heffer, which was distributed to all 1979 Conference delegates. They also knew because in our book *What Went Wrong* we included a devastating essay by Geoff Bish, the Party's Research Officer, which described the process of drafting the Manifesto in some detail.

Ken Coates, The Institute for Workers' Control, Nottingham

Your hatchet job on Tony Benn (*NS* 12 June) contains a number of factual inaccuracies. I am not qualified to comment on all of them but here are a few.

You write: 'Benn has never resigned, or been sacked, from anything'. In fact, Benn resigned in 1958 as a front bench spokesman on defence and in 1960 from the National Executive Committee over Gaitskell's line on nuclear weapons. In 1975 he was removed by Harold Wilson from his post as Secretary of State for Industry — whether or not you wish to call this being 'sacked' is up to you, but that is how it was widely regarded at the time.

You write: 'the proponents of Tony Benn and open democracy have been congratulating themselves on the process by which they have . . . ensured that the mighty block vote of the Transport and General Workers Union will be cast on their man's side in the autumn'. In fact, the decision to recommend that the Deputy Leadership be not discussed at the TGWU conference was made by the union's executive at the suggestion of the Acting General Secretary, Alex Kitson, who is not widely regarded as a supporter of Mr. Benn. The view of the various organisations working for Benn's election has consistently been that the matter is best settled by the TGWU conference and even now there is a possibility that the matter will be raised from the conference floor.

On uranium from Namibia you write: 'But in 1976, back at Technology, he recommended the Rossing imports . . .' In fact, by 1976 Mr Benn was Secretary for Energy, not Technology. He did not recommend the Rossing imports; on the contrary, he submitted a paper to the Cabinet advising against but he was over-ruled.

Chris Mullin, 206 Brixton Road, London SW9

In your invitation to 'committed left-wing' Labour MPs to 'treat Denis Healey with respect' as a political performer you seem to reject the inseparability of politics and morals — as Healey has done on the most important question of all, nuclear weapons.

Some will recall that when the Bishop of Chester was asked to bless the second of Britain's Polaris fleet at the launching ceremony in February 1967, at Birkenhead, he found that this act would contradict his Christian beliefs. He refused to do it and confined his blessing to the crew, not the vessel. For this he earned a rebuke from Denis Healey, the then Minister of Defence, that this was a matter for politicians, not bishops, and that it was a matter of politics, not morals.

Phil Braithwaite, Chairperson, CND (Birmingham Branch), 87 Station Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14

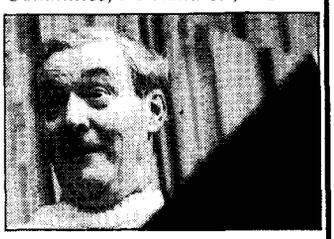
The *New Statesman* is of course entitled to advocate an abstention in the Deputy Leadership election, even if many on both sides of the argument consider this something of a cop-out. However, what must be fully understood by those who intend to abstain is that if they abstain merely by failing to attend the electoral college their abstention will not be registered in the voting.

Take the case of the PLP. However many MPs vote it will still count for 30 per cent of the college. Given that Denis Healey can count on a majority of the PLP voting for him, to abstain in the election by not attending will merely increase Healey's chance of winning. Taking purely hypothetical figures: if 50 per cent of the PLP are committed Healey supporters, 30 per cent for Benn and 20 per cent are swayed by your leader and abstain, perhaps 'on urgent constituency business', the PLP's vote will be cast 62½ per cent for Healey and 37½ per cent for Benn. Healey's vote will have gone up 12½ per cent to Benn's 7½ per cent. And this is on the rather optimistic assumption that only half the PLP are committed to Healey.

Similarly, in the constituency section if it breaks Benn 80 per cent — Healey 10 per cent, abstentions 10 per cent, Benn will end up with 88 per cent of the college to Healey's 12 per cent.

The only way, to abstain, therefore, and have no effect on the result is to turn up in person and write abstention (or whatever else comes naturally) on the ballot paper in the hope that Labour's powers that be will carry abstentions through to the college — though what happens if consequently no candidate secures a 50 per cent + 1 share of the college nobody knows.

Nigel Stanley, Organising Secretary, Labour Co-Ordinating Committee, 9 Poland St., W1



Your statement that I found my 'local party cool towards the idea' of my standing for Labour's deputy leadership is not in accordance with the facts. I was approached by one or two MPs and some constituencies, but declined the offer. At no time did I consult my local party as the matter did not arise.

Joan Lestor, MP House of Commons, London SW1

Is Foot a unilateralist?

Chris Mullin has done the movement a service by reminding us (*NS* 12 June) that Michael Foot has campaigned for unilateralism throughout his political career and for longer than any other member of the Shadow Cabinet.

It is therefore all the more curious that Chris Mullin should make the startling claim that, with reference to nuclear disarmament, 'Mr Healey's views remain largely the same, but Mr Foot's have altered.' There are no fewer than six quotes from Michael Foot in the same article, not one of which supports the allegation that he has changed his view in any way.

The sole foundation on which Chris Mullin erects this shaky hypothesis is a quote from *The Times* informing us that when Denis Healey last spoke in the Commons he did so, 'with Mr Foot, *well-known for his unilateralist views,* seated on the Front Bench beside him.' (my italics) The train of thought insinuated by this reference is as follows:

> Denis Healey is against unilateralism.
> Michael Foot sat through a speech by Denis Healey.
> Ergo, Michael Foot is against unilateralism.

This is guilt by association with a vengeance!

Chris Mullin has plainly put much effort into poring over old numbers of *Tribune* in search of unilateralist quotes from Michael Foot. It is therefore odd that he omits Michael Foot's recent speech at St Alban's, which was quoted approvingly in *Tribune:*

> I believe in peace all the more in a world which can blow itself to pieces. That's why I'm so strongly in favour of trying to do away with these nuclear weapons. That's why I say that the first task of the next Labour government will be to use all its power to try to stop the nuclear arms race, which could send us all to destruction . . .

Now who says Michael Foot has altered his views?

Robin Cook MP, House of Commons, London SW1

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Blackburn et al

Contd. from p.12

Labour's parliamentary Left, but is not that a good part of the problem? Page and Kellner do not strengthen their case by proferring such doubtful testimony, nor do they prove anything concerning the reactions of the 'British Left' as understood in any wider sense. Eric Heffer is a different matter. He has admirable qualities that Benn lacks. But then he has not joined the 'left-wing revolt against Benn'. (See, for example, his article in the *Spectator,* 12 June; indeed this article would more appropriately have appeared in the *New Statesman,* though it would have given difficulties for the editorial argument.)

THE NEW STATESMAN suffers the turmoil in the Labour Party as a grievous blow, with Benn as the villain wielding the blunt instrument. In reality the profound crisis which the Labour Party and movement is now undergoing marks, in many ways, the most hopeful period in its history. In the past the structure and ideology of Labourism has perverted or frustrated the best energies of the labour and socialist movement, mortgaging Labour's historic objectives to a palsied parliamentarism and a degenerating capitalist order. The positive significance of the Benn campaign is that it represents one way of retaining initiative for the Left in its effort to create a new model labour movement. Though Benn's personal qualities should not be dwelt upon to the exclusion of all other considerations, they are certainly of some importance.

Of late many in the labour and socialist movement have had the opportunity to make a first-hand assessment of Benn's personal qualities and, it seems, their conclusions differ from those of Hart, Kinnock, Page and Kellner. Benn's extremely dubious role in the case of the Rossing Mine contract, or his ministerial sponsorship of atomic energy security, should certainly not be discounted or forgotten — incidentally the far left publications which now support Benn's candidacy (critically) were among the first to investigate the Rossing affair (e.g. *Socialist Challenge* under Tariq Ali's editorship). However, the assessment of Benn's record by Page and Kellner makes no effort to be balanced, and does not succeed even in being accurate. Benn has accepted criticism of his ministerial record far more readily and honestly than his colleagues. That record also included some small, but not negligible, indications that he was beginning to question the Fabian technocratic ethos — for example the halting of the nuclear re-processing programme pending a public debate.

Moreover, Benn's ministerial record does *not* include, as Page and Kellner imply, responsibility for implementing Labour's nationalisation of the ship-building industry.*

Finally, there are the questions raised by Benn's stand on 'policy'. Not only has Benn been a far more effective advocate of Labour's policies on defence and unemployment than the majority of his colleagues but he has usefully opened up debate on Europe, Northern Ireland and the House of Lords. The *New Statesman* editorial seems to approve of what it calls 'Mr Foot's *demarche*'. For the leader of the PLP to explain his actions at length before the whole movement is, of course, a highly unusual and welcome event — for which we have Benn to thank. But the same cannot be said for the quality of the explanations Foot offered.

Foot's pathetic attempt to divide the Tory party over defence instead of advancing Labour's alternative non-nuclear strategy encapsulated the sort of petty parliamentary calculation for which Labour leaders are justly famous. On this occasion Benn acted with more than 70 Labour MPs to bring conference policy before the public. *Pace* Michael Foot, advocating a new position on Northern Ireland before a labour movement audience is quite different from voting in Parliament, as a Labour representative, for agreed Party policy. One is the practice of

*See Hugh Beynon and Hilary Wainwright, *A Workers Report on Vickers*, London 1979, p. 53; & Ken Coates's Letter this week, p 13.

LETTERS

Contd. from previous page

Chris Mullin's promotion of Tony Benn's campaign seems to be getting the better of his judgment as a journalist. In his article he writes. 'Today, Michael Foot orders Labour MPs to abstain in the face of a vote on unilateral nuclear disarmament, and seeks to admonish one of the 74 rebels who broke the officials Party line.' This he contrasts with Michael's stand back in 1961.

There was no vote on unilateral disarmament at the end of the debate on the Defence Estimates. What happened was as follows. I and a number of other Labour MPs voted against the entire Defence Estimates. We did so for a variety of reasons, but no doubt a common link was our revulsion at seeing defence expenditure increased at a time of other cuts in public expenditure leading to job losses, school and hospital closures, the collapse of the housing programme and real cuts in benefit.

I think we were right to vote as we did but in one sense we behaved wrongly to our colleagues. None of us raised this issue at the relevant Party meeting when we may have persuaded the whole of the PLP to vote with us. Nor 'as I understand it' did Tony Benn raise the possibility of this vote at a Shadow Cabinet meeting.

Frank Field MP, House of Commons, London SW1

No retreat, no surrender

Bruce Page & Peter Kellner reply: Naturally, we print Robin Blackburn's article by way of right of reply, and not because we find it very convincing ourselves. Its basic procedure is to define as automatically 'un-left' any criticism of the Bennite position. Once defined away, such criticism can be safely ignored. It is finally up to readers to judge whether they are persuaded by the method: there will, in any case, be plenty of time over the next few months to return to the debate.

Meanwhile, there are some factual points on which readers may not easily have access to the record. We made some errors of documentation and nomenclature which we're pleased to put right: true, *Arguments for Socialism* was published in 1979, and the Penguin version in 1980; and we wrongly gave Benn's post in 1976 as Technology, when we should have said Energy.

These do not affect the thrust of the argument. Ken Coates's error does, for he suggest that *Arguments for Socialism* is a collection of speeches to be judged in the context of their original making. Not so. In his editor's note, Chris Mullin says his task, in consultation with Tony Benn, was to 'reduce the speeches, lectures and articles' into a 'coherent narrative by removing repetition and outdated material; inserting notes and updating some of the statistics.' There is no doubt that the book is presented as a considered, current testament, and indeed some of the rather technocratic things which Benn was saying in the seventies (and would not today meet with Robin Blackburn's approval) have been edited out.

The point about the shipbuilding passage in *Arguments for Socialism* is that it reports Benn's advertisement of what *ought* to have happened in such a way that the reader is led to think it actually did happen.

We applaud Ken Coates's desire to advertise Spokesman Books, and especially Tony Eccles' excellent chapter in *The New Worker Co-operatives.* But we weren't referring to that book. Nor, in our article, were we referring to the civil servants' advice, but to the advice of the management consultants Inbucon. They said that £3.9m (all Benn could get) would only be enough if KME closed down its fruit-juice operation and reduced its workforce to 590. How can one take credit for calling in management consultants if one ignores their prescient advice, and then writes it out of the record?

On the manifesto: Benn would have had a case if, as Coates implies, he had told Labour's annual conference that various NEC ideas had been watered down. *But that was not what Benn said.* He said, without qualification, that a number of proposals had been 'ruled out'. To avoid misunderstanding, Benn repeated 'ruled out' five times. He was, quite simply, wrong. We made it clear at the time that other proposals *were* ruled out (see *NS* 6 April 1979: *Manifesto rout*). But these items did not appear in the list Benn offered in his speech.

On the T&G: some of the organisations working in Benn's cause may feel that the matter is best settled at the union's conference. But that hasn't been the operational view of Benn's supporters where it counts — inside the T&G executive. A number of his backers there told the *NS* quite clearly that they did *not* want the deputy leadership discussed at the conference.

About sackings and resignations: we should have remembered the 1960 resignation. But the 1975 episode — moving Benn from Industry to Energy — cannot be allowed to count. If Benn thought he was being fired he should have said so at the time. You can't have your new job at Energy and eat it too.

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socialist democracy, the other a violation of it. So far as I am aware the Left has not sought to deny Labour MPs a free voice in Labour's internal debates; it has simply demanded that Party policy be faithfully represented by its representatives, when they act in that capacity.

We learn from Page and Kellner that: 'On withdrawal from the Common Market, for example, Silkin has a longer and more consistent record than Benn.' This amounts to congratulating Silkin for his crass record of pig-headed nationalism. By contrast Benn, as in his recent Lisbon speech, sometimes attempts to put withdrawal from the EEC in an internationalist context.

Page and Kellner also draw attention to the opinion of Benn's 'left-wing opponents' that on economic policy 'some form of constructive dialogue with the right is both possible and necessary.' Benn, it is feared, does not accept this. As it happens there are areas where a 'constructive dialogue' with the right might prove advantageous — Europe being one of them — but economic policy is an area where a clean break would have to be made. 'Left wingers' who look forward to a constructive dialogue with the Labour right on such matters as the acceptability of IMF guidelines, unemployment as a necessary evil, and so forth, display a suicidal and feeble-minded generosity that should not be indulged.

The Left is further advised that it must learn not simply to dialogue with the right but to 'accommodate' it as well. Perhaps Page and Kellner are worried that Healey will be driven from the Labour Party. If so this will be his own choice since no one proposes depriving him of anything but the post of deputy leader of the party. Perhaps some right-wing MPs will find democratisation intolerable. In this case we could well remember the reaction of Marx and Engels confronted by a similar problem in the early days of the German workers movement:

> We cannot ally ourselves, therefore, with people who openly declare that the workers are too uneducated to free themselves and must first be liberated from above by philanthropic big bourgeois and petty bourgeois. If these gentlemen constitute themselves as a petty bourgeois social democratic party, they have a perfect right to do so; it would be possible, then, to negotiate with them under certain circumstances and to form a common front with them under certain circumstances. ('Circular Letter to SPD')

The criticisms the *New Statesman* has to make of Benn are presented as those of the 'tolerant but commited left', but sound more like a shame-faced version of the arguments of Labour's parliamentary centre. There are certainly criticisms to be made of Benn and the Left. There is, in fact, now a vast and urgent task of forging effective socialist policies to meet the impasse of British capital, the chronic institutional stagnation of the British state, and the danger of a new Cold War. Moreover those policies must be the property of the movement outside as well as inside Parliament. The *New Statesman* could have played a creative role in this renewal of Labour's programme, and in opening it up to the important new strands of radical thought which have developed outside the Party. Evidently its Editor has decided otherwise. □

Smile please

Arthur Marshall

IN THE DAYS before gifted Cecil Beaton revolutionised portrait photography by snapping sitters, though sitting was the last thing that they were required to do, upside down and in a sea of balloons, photgraphs tended to be deadly serious and head-on, as in the less acceptable kind of motor accident. Many of our British photographers moved in what were relatively exalted circles and various revered names are stored away on memory's tablets — Foulsham & Banfield, Bassano, the Downeys (W and D), Bertram Park, Sasha and particularly Elliott & Fry who specialised in rather grim-looking major-generals, politicians and the more august and successful type of Bishop. Not for these experts the multitudinous shutter clicks of today and the profligate waste of film. Bishops were exposed, if you follow me, at the most six times in a sitting ('And now a little smile, my Lord?') and the choice for the frontispiece to that book of memoirs, 'From My Palace Window', was therefore a narrow one, a choice sometimes left to the Bishop's wife: 'I like Number 3 best, Ambrose. They've caught your twinkle.'

Which brings me to a long overdue apology. The happy snap of self which normally graces, if I may venture to use such a verb, this page was inserted rather against my will. Better for me, I urged the *NS* authorities, to remain, visually at least, Something of a Mystery but I was overruled. Hence the chubby likeness, the carefree air, the gleaming gig-lamps. So sorry. However you'll want, I dare say, to know into whose talented lens I peered in order to obtain for you this unusual ocular treat. I hastened, as I always do when needing anything, into admirable Exeter and into the roomy photographic *salons* of the Navana Studios ('We Are Opposite The Museum') and hey-presto!

Until a visit that I made quite recently, all my motor trips into Exeter have been a joy and delight. Bowling along the Teign valley, one runs over in the mind the different aims to be achieved — chicken joints from Sainsbury's, a tie or two (so *reasonable*) from Marks and Spencer, cash to be paid into the Abbey National, the latest Frederick Forsyth from the library, a refreshing bottle of Martini from Victoria Wine and then, if in really madcap mood, a currant bun and cup of coffee at those charming tea-rooms in The Close with a splendiferous view of the cathedral's cleaned and superb west front. But the other day, on crossing the city's boundary line, a sad shock presented itself. I have mentioned before the subject of Town Twinning, to me a pointless and quite idiotic linking with some remote frog place of which few have ever heard and for which nobody cares a fig. I have however grown accustomed to the announcement, after an ornamental board saying WELCOME TO EXETER, that we are twinned with Rennes, and so picture my dismay on finding, without warning or any public discussion that I know of, that we are now also twinned with BAD HOMBURG. German, and could anything be more unfortunate? To begin with, the actual choice of name is a disaster. Although you and I and other linguistic smartyboots know that *Bad* means bath or spa, the word 'bad' will to a number of people merely mean the opposite of good. And as for Homburg, we all know what that is — a species of felt hat worn by men, with a narrowish brim and a dent in the top, a depression ideal as a rain-water trap and a refreshment area for any passing birdies. So the full name will finally signify, to more than one, BAD HAT. I ask you!

And where, may I enquire, is all this going to end? If we are now prepared to twin with a country whose inhabitants were busy, a mere forty years ago, raining bombs down on Exeter, slaughtering hundreds and almost completely destroying it, what about other countries who have never got up to mischief? Portugal, for instance, 'our oldest ally'. Or plucky little Belgium. Luxembourg, perhaps, Sweden, possibly. One only hopes that somebody responsible will be in charge and that, as the twinning craze spreads, good sense and, above all, good taste will march hand in hand. Delightful though the place is, I am sure, one would oneself think twice about an urban link-up with Bumbum (Nigeria).

Pitfalls are to be found on every side. The current custom of broad-minded, not to say loose, talk with no holds barred has prepared almost everybody for almost everything but even then, who would give a cry of joy at finding themselves nominally joined to Orgaz (Spain) or Pronic, and where could that be but in frogland. Even the simple Hiko (USA) carries with it a rather damaging suggestion of insobriety. The Americans, bless them, are a good bit less sensitive about names than the rest of us and something tells me that, did we but know, oddities galore lurk in their hinterland — Pyorrhoea (Minnesota), Penis (Arizona) and Armpit (Michigan). Not that, with towns like Krapina (Yugoslavia) about, one needs to invent anything. And there are various Japanese place names beginning with the letter F that I really do not care to discuss here and on a page that is essentially, and will remain so, family reading.

How cheering it is to discover that not all in the twinning world is accepted with supine complacency. It seems that the mayor of that pleasing Hampshire town, Basingstoke, linked with Alençon for reasons unknown to most, has taken exception to remarks made and an opinion expressed about Ireland by his French opposite number, a M. Pierre Mauger, and has thereby imperilled what I can hardly think to have been a particularly secure or interesting or emotional union of, so far, thirteen years' duration. But what will happen, do you suppose, as the news of the rupture spreads down the Basingstoke streets? Will there be panic in the Co-op? Will prayers for a reconciliation be offered in the parish church? Will old ladies faint dead away in Boots (rather a good place to do it in)? I doubt it. There might be a feeling of relief. In mid-1940 it was no sort of hardship to realise that we were, at last, alone. □

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Diary

ANNA COOTE

■Sunday. A large crowd gathered at the entrance to the Pavilion. The BBC vans were blocking the side-streets. Photographers jostled with the TV crews. Demonstrators waved placards. Leafleteers and newspaper vendors dodged in and out of the police cordons — as the delegates poured in for the start of business. It was the first day of the Labour Party's 57th National Conference . . . I'm sorry, I'll write that again.

■Sunday. A few day-trippers arrived in Buxton, the beautiful, sleepy Derbyshire spa, to admire the flower display in the Pavilion Gardens. They found the place a little more crowded than usual. There may have been something in the *Guardian* about it. It was the first day of the Labour Party's 57th National Women's Conference. I sat at the near-deserted press tables, remembering the hullabaloo that attended the other Labour conference. Why did this one cast so faint a shadow?

Of course the traditions of our media dictate that a women's conference isn't especially 'newsworthy', but it wasn't just a matter of male chauvinism. This event had insignificance programmed into it. The speeches were often rousing, the resolutions excellent; they concerned such crucial issues as employment, education, equality, health, economic policy, energy and disarmament. There was a far more united commitment to socialism than could have been detected among the men at Blackpool last autumn. But these delegates were dealing in a different currency. They couldn't *decide* to do anything at all — they could only *ask*. As women, they wielded no power.

■The gap between old and young delegates was astonishing. There were those of 50-plus, still in a majority, and a fair sprinkling of women under 30 (considerably more than last year, I was told). The gap in between was far too wide to be explained away by the demands of parenthood. It seemed, rather, to represent the generation of socialist women who were caught up in the early enthusiasm of the women's movement: some put their energies into the unions, but most decided (as I did) that the Labour Party wasn't worth the trouble. We thought we could be strong enough in our own right to get what we wanted. Perhaps our younger sisters have learned a lesson or two.

■Not only are they joining the Labour Party, but they are also trying to change it, to establish a voice for themselves. They had put down a string of resolutions which mirrored (in a sense) the efforts of the Left to increase Party democracy. They want the women's conference to elect its own executive committee, and to have a right to forward selected motions directly to the main conference. They want Parliament to operate a normal working day and to provide proper facilities for parents. And they want positive measures to ensure that female candidates are short-listed for selection. None of these motions was carried, but some of the votes were very close indeed, and they will no doubt try again next year. Ironically, it was argued against them that these measures would endanger current moves to make the Party more democratic and accountable. That seemed to smack of 'waiting until after the revolution'.

■Back in London, I pick up my copy of *NOT . . .*, the resilient organ of *Time Out*'s sacked and evicted workforce. This week's issue runs to eight pages, with a 30,000 print-run and has attracted £2,000 in advertising revenue. I am intrigued by the response to this dispute of other journalists — especially the very well-heeled ones, in Fleet Street and in television. 'If you ask me', they say (usually when I haven't), 'these *Time Out* people are in cloud-cuckoo land. What makes them think they can get away with it? Typists and receptionists on eight and a half grand! They can't expect that kind of thing to last . . .' Earning twice as much as *Time Out* journalists, they can't stomach the notion of non-journalists getting paid half as much as themselves.

The point about *Time Out*'s hard-won agreement — which is certainly the best in the country — is that it's an invaluable model for other trade unionists. Not only does it establish equal pay, and show that parity is viable in a profit-making private company, but it also includes 26 weeks' paid maternity leave, six weeks paid paternity leave, creche facilities for pre-school children, baby-sitting payments to cover hours worked after the creche is closed, and the right to know a fair amount about how company profits are being used. Few other workers could hope to win a deal like that just yet, but at least there's something to point to, proof that it can be done. If the *Time Out* chapels lose their battle, we'll all be the weaker for it.

■For some it's the film listings, but for me it's the Lonely Hearts I miss most while *Time Out* is off the streets. Not that I'm down on my luck, you understand, nor that I've ever dreamt of answering one — but I find them irresistible to read. Such a fine display of self-expression; an art form (as *Time Out* itself might say), to be able to sum up oneself and one's needs in a few brief lines. The nerve and dash of it fills me with wonder. I notice that far more men than women advertise — even among the 'straights'. Do men in general have a simpler view of the world? 'Rich guy, 38, into big bikes, wants bad girl for good times' . . . 'Nick (21) would like a girl friend to sit in a field full of buttercups and hold hands with him.' (*Time Out*, 8-14 May). If I were ever tempted to take the plunge, I'd always be stopped by the dreadful imagining of that first meeting: sitting in the West End wine bar, nervously glancing around . . . who will it be? Surely not the one with the sparse beard and the sorrowful eyes. 'Hi! I'm Graham, the sincere, non-sexist Libran.' Back to the drawing board!

■And to more serious matters. Next Saturday may just be a turning point in the history of the British intellectual Left. (Well someone's got to be the optimist.) A meeting is being held to discuss the formation of a new Socialist Society, to be 'devoted to educational, polemical and research work within the labour movement, and within allied radical movements, and seeking to develop a wider audience for socialist ideas within the country at large.' There's an impressive list of organisers, which hints at a marriage between *Feminist Review* and *New Left Review*: Hilary Wainwright, Raymond Williams, Michele Barrett, Ralph Miliband, Catherine Hall, Robin Blackburn, Elizabeth Wilson, Perry Anderson, Maxine Molyneux, Stuart Hall, Tariq Ali, Susan Watkins, Michael Rustin, Fred Halliday. Among many other details which have to be hammered out is the question of a name for the new society. 'Beyond the Candlelight'?

Roger Woddis

With intent to alarm

Come, let us offer heartfelt thanks
That he was only firing blanks —
Though better if they'd sung a hymn
Before they tore him limb from limb!

To think (I reel, I must admit)
How close She came to copping it!
A foul and fiendish nutter he
Who practises lese-majestie!

The blood of every patriot
Must boil and bubble geyser-hot
At such an act by such a cur
Who came so near to harming Her!

A pistol fired, albeit fake,
Could leave a nightmare in its wake;
Dear God, we need a private bill
For weapons that pretend to kill.

Our very souls that loathe the gun
Cry out for something to be done,
Lest others ape the heartless lad —
How sick he is, how clearly mad!

But oh, how eminently sane
Are those who, in their own domain
And armed with weapons that are real,
Would turn our blood to cochineal.

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcard, please.)

☐ The court heard how Thompson, aged 33, of North Hill Drive, Harold Hill, was discovered by police swearing and shouting obsenities at a bollard on the corner of Dagnam Park Drive, Harold Hill. He was approached by officers who were on patrol in the area and Thompson told them that he was looking for his son who he believed was hiding inside the traffic island light. —*Romford Observer* (P.A. Bond)

☐ Back garden nuclear shelters will not need to comply with building regulations provided that they are a certain distance from other buildings and are not connected to public drains, the Environment Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, has told local authorities. — *Guardian* (P.W.R.Foot)

☐ MPs voted themselves a salary incease of 18 per cent, after explaining that it was really only 6 per cent if the arithmetic was done properly and sums withheld in previous years were deducted. — *The Times* (Amanda Welles)

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BOOKS & ARTS

Our bodies ourselves

Modern medicine brings undeniable benefits, but do our modern medics have a right view of themselves and their priorities? BRUCE HEPBURN starts this look at books about our doctors, our bodies, ourselves by examining the bad taste of an American surgeon.

Keystone

Camera Press

Should an American, after reading Mr Selzer's guide to the body, in sickness and in health, do him a mischief, no jury would convict if the aggressor pleaded self defence. To confront civilised Western humanity with an unsparing account of its internal economy is bad enough. To cast new taboos — sickness, old age and death — in people's teeth, like the contents of a particularly noisome bed pan, is provocation of an altogether novel sort. It is as shocking as if Alfred Lord Tennyson had written an explicit account of a sexual encounter between Victoria and Albert, or George Frederick Watts had depicted Mr and Mrs Gladstone in the last extremity of lust.

The author of this frightful exercise in bad taste really ought to know better. He works in the heart of the Land of the Fee. He is a surgeon at Yale. And yet he is in a rage at what he's seen and done. With one ingredient of the great American dream — the employment of euphemisms to describe unlovely things in the hope that they will become less terrible — he displays a distressing lack of sympathy. His patients are not prettified for visitors. His foetuses cry out before dying. His old folk do not 'go gentle into that good night' but are organisms in the process of minutely itemised decay. He has even added a new terror unto death by describing the furious activity in a decomposing corpse.

Grievous bodily harm is too kind a fate for one so lacking in tenderness to our modern sensibilities. What is needed is something cruel and unusual like being forced to read his own account of a husband feeding his obstructed wife through a false passage into her intestinal tract, with egg nog from a pitcher on a lacquer tray.

As blasphemy succeeds blasphemy — that we must pay for our excesses, that what matters is not how long, but how, we live, that surgeons are not supermen but always alone and often afraid — we realise that we have been here before. Over the sand and the sea and in the sky with that other literary libertine Saint Exupéry. Here is the same impertinent candour of a craftsman searching in his ostensibly glamorous, but generally humdrum occupation for nothing less than the secrets of his soul. And anybody else's he can get his hands on. And using imagery of vivid strangeness. 'The abdomen is such a peculiar place that you expect to find drawings of buffalo on the walls.' 'A tumour, squat, toadish, fungoid. The only thing it does not do is croak.' 'Longevity is a Pyrrhic victory over time. I should far rather keel over at sixty, cut my loses don't you know?'

The blurb warns us that *Mortal Lessons* is not for the squeamish. Certainly, although it might have done very well for contemporaries of Sir Thomas Browne, it simply will not do for us at all. Not tell a wife that her husband has 'passed away', but that he's dead indeed! Whatever next? Perhaps that all the cosmeticians in the world cannot deny the permanence of death. And then where shall we of little faith be, I should like to know, confronted with the triviality of our mortality? Rather uneasy in our minds to say the least of it, don't you know?

Glyn Ford

Putting doctors in their place

For Ian Kennedy, modern medicine has taken the wrong path; an easy route which threatens to lead us into a cul-de-sac. This mistake has been the 'scientisation' of medicine. No longer is medicine a concern for the well being of the whole person and whole community. Instead it has adopted the Cartesian paradigm of man as machine. Medicine's task is to get the human machine back on the road when it breaks down. To do this the machine is adapted to the environment and not the environment to the machine. At one extreme medicine has become a production line process of instant fixes. In five minutes (the average contact time per visit between GP and patient) the symptoms are put through their paces and then blotted out with one or more of the arsenal of drugs available and the next patient trundled in. At the other extreme the puzzle of death is solved by the incremental addition of more and more life support systems arrayed around the all but lifeless corpse. What is required instead is a medicine that deals with people as people and not machines. But how have we got medicine into this situation?

Coming logically with the scientisation of medicine is a changed perception of its status by the public. If it is a science then it must be left to those who know. On certain technical issues one can only agree, but as Kennedy argues these are rarely to be found. Within medical practice political, ethical and moral considerations continually intrude. But the abdication of responsibility for all these decisions to the doctors gives them power over our lives. The result of the exercise of this power Kennedy catalogues and finds wanting. He wants us to reclaim our right to a say in how medicine is to be directed.

How extra-medical issues enter medical practice can be shown in numerous examples. Currently ten per cent of all prescriptions and a fifth of the annual expenditure on drugs by the NHS goes on Valium and its counterparts. The women (two-thirds of all prescriptions for anti-depressants are given to women) dosed with this mass medication are not generally ill. True, they are having problems in coping with life. Yet this is not their fault, but that of the society we live in: they are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions; the family is short of money; they are stuck at home with the children; life is passing them by. But the doctor — even if he wanted to — cannot change the economic and social order, so instead he merely dulls the pain. The doctor is thus an agent of social control. By his actions he ensures that the prevailing social and political attitudes are reinforced and maintained rather than challenged.

Even some doctors would accept this, but would argue that this is a small and illegitimate facet of modern medicine, which has been forced on them by the failure of government to tackle the underlying problems. Valium may be a poor second best, but it is better than nothing. However, Kennedy's case for reclaiming medicine from the doc-

Mortal Lesson: Notes on the Art of Surgery by RICHARD SELZER *Chatto* £8.50

The Unmasking of Medicine by IAN KENNEDY *Allen & Unwin* £8.95

The Ladykillers: Why Smoking is a Feminist Issue by BOBBIE JACOBSON *Pluto* £1.95

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tor can be made as sharply at the high technology end of modern medicine — organ transplants, 'test-tube' babies and the defeat of death. What criteria are to be used to select those who are to receive a new lease of life from heart transplants? Now that the body can be kept 'alive' almost indefinitely by life support systems that can substitute for almost any bodily function, when does death occur? Is it right that the medical discoveries of Steptoe and his colleagues on *in vitro* fertilisation, made with public money — or private for that matter — should be withheld from publication so that only those rich enough to pay can benefit from them? All these decisions clearly cannot be left to doctors alone. Yet to discuss them concedes what should not be easily surrendered; that is, some say on the wider issue of what medical research should be supported in the first instance.

LIFE VALUES implicit in certain policy decisions can be calculated. The decision not to introduce child proof drug containers places a value on an unknown child's life of less than £1000. While the decision not to provide treatment for chronic renal failure in people over fifty values their lives at less than £30,000. In contrast, heart transplant surgery puts a much higher value on certain lives. To date public justification of these choices, for they are choices, has not been given. In future, Kennedy argues, they should be made openly and with the involvement of a constituency extending far beyond the medical profession. This will begin the task of getting medicine back on the right path.

Exceptionally, the BBC in selecting Ian Kennedy for the 1980 Reith lectures found someone who had a cogent and important message to put across. In preparing this book from the lectures the author has written a splendidly polemical work that will irritate many of those engaged in the medical profession but should be a tonic to consumers of the service. □

Anne Karpf

Do you fume?

There is a book yet to be written called *Life is a Feminist Issue*. Till then, and post-Susie Orbach, we shall have to make do with Bobbie Jacobson's book. She'll not be without her opponents: there are plenty of incredulous males and doubting Thomasinas who would regard this as a piece of special pleading, since the noxious habit is apparently not sex-specific. Yet Jacobson makes out a convincing — and important — case.

She has a grisly array of evidence in tow. It seems that the proportion of men who smoke is decreasing in most industrialised countries, while the proportion of women smokers is staying the same or increasing, as is the amount that women smoke. Media pundits explain this as the result of women's growing emancipation: we gadabout women have taken up male styles, and equal rights include the right to congealed lungs and gangrenous legs.

Jacobson rejects this argument by splitting it into two: women may take up smoking in an attempt to emulate male freedom and independence, but they do not continue to smoke for these reasons. She marshals fascinating evidence to show that the successful ex-smoker is typically male, married, a college graduate, with three or four children and a supportive wife. And, as if we hadn't guessed, marriage and parenthood for a woman make her less likely to have given up smoking.

Why? Mercifully, Jacobson eschews the dubious medical or psychological models, and is critical of notions of nicotine addiction and mental types. Nor is she drawn to the health education paradigm, which often views smokers as feckless, ignorant miscreants who can be shocked or bludgeoned into abstinence. Instead, she turns to women's own accounts of why they smoke. It would be easy to parody her 'Tanya is a 30-year-old housewife' women's magazine style in these case-histories, and some of the interviews sound stilted — did someone really say 'At school I could never maintain best-friend status with any one person'?

Yet in the end, these accounts provide potent evidence of Jacobson's central thesis: that women smoke 'not to accompany expressions of frustration and anxiety, but instead of expressing these feelings'. Like pressure cookers, women boil away inside, and literally fume outside. They are scared of losing control and expressing hostility and, unlike men, have fewer socially acceptable outlets for aggressive behaviour. Significantly, women's anger is turned in on themselves.

The other factor which ties a woman to her nicotine is the fear of becoming fat; received wisdom is that when you give up cigarettes, you put on weight. For many of Jacobson's informants, their need for the confidence which thinness secured for them far outweighed long-term health risks.

Bobbie Jacobson avoids guilt-tripping and victim-blaming. She shows how the tobacco companies, with deadly aim, are gunning for women as a growth market, and are perfectly prepared to co-opt the women's movement on the way, as in Virginia Slims' 'You've come a long way, baby' ads, which *Ms* magazine rejected on the grounds that 'baby' was a sexist form of address (and not because cigarettes kill women).

I have referred to women smokers as 'they' not because I am an ex-woman, but because I'm an ex-smoker, with the characteristic glow of probity which is almost as offensive to smokers as their smoke is to us. So how do you give up? Here, Jacobson really comes into her own, lambasting health education campaigns which either totally ignore women or see them only in their reproductive role as mothers and wives, enjoining them to give up for the sake of the foetus or husband, as in the famous Health Education Council pregnant woman advertisement.

Jacobson realises that it's hard to give up smoking, and she takes women seriously: just how seriously can be seen by comparing her with an insidious recent little book called *Stop: A Guide to Non-Smoking* (Penguin, 95p).

Shaped like a cigarette pack, this is a scissors-and-paste job, with famous quotes on smoking, the obligatory shock-horror statistics, and a quite offensive banality and glibness.

Like magazine articles which advise the suicidal to join evening classes, it tells chronic smokers to, among other ploys, keep themselves occupied by naming the 50 states of America. 'If you are really motivated to stop smoking you should have little difficulty' it asserts (so why the book?), and the section on women is devoted almost entirely to women as mothers. By contrast, Jacobson really gets down to the practicalities — quizzes and all — of helping women understand why they smoke and how they may set about stopping. □

Jocelyn Brooke

THE ORCHID TRILOGY

Introduction by Anthony Powell

"He had a rare brand of irony, considerable cunning and a marvellous ear for prose. It is a long while since I enjoyed a revival so much . . . For style and for a poignancy straight from the heart, these are books which should never be let out of print again." *Robin Lane Fox,* **Financial Times**

"He makes Siegfried Sassoon's First World War trilogy about himself as a fox-hunting officer seem as coarse as the chase." *Andrew Sinclair,* **The Times**

"All this gently faded material is revivified by the unembarrassed nature of Brooke's commitment to it and the brilliance with which he writes about it." *Anthony Quinton,* **Daily Telegraph**

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Secker & Warburg

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FICTION

James Campbell

New horizons

Living in the Maniototo by JANET FRAME
The Women's Press £3.25
Darling Daughters by ELIZABETH TROOP
Granada £6.95.
The Saga of a Seagull by YASHAR KEMAL
Collins-Harvill £6.95

Novelists who break the rules in fiction must, to fuel their confidence, possess a great deal of talent or none at all. Every reader ought to be able to think of authors who have pushed back the frontiers of fiction so far they've eventually disappeared from view. Janet Frame — New Zealand's finest living novelist, according to a blurb I am prepared to believe — breaks every rule there is, and does so with exhilarating skill. The heroine of *Living in the Maniototo* inhabits an area somewhere between real life and fiction and her every gesture, step and utterance is an effort to determine the true nature of each. Yet with every move she makes it seems a problem is created, not solved.

'Good morning. I am here to entertain you', her heroine greets us. 'I will make you laugh and cry. I am Violet Pansy Proudlock, an expert in near, near-distant, and distant ventriloquism.' She is also Alice Thumb, a gossip, and also Mavis Furness Barwell Halleton, author of *The Green Fuse.* She proudly announces that she has 'buried two husbands', one of whom, a French language expert turned debt collector, died in his sleep after an inexplicable spasm in his throat: 'for all I know he might have choked on a remembered idiom.' Mavis-Violet-Alice's anger is aroused because 'fiction would have arranged it better', yet her own fiction is continually playing tricks on her. Under close scrutiny the surfaces of language become more and not less treacherous, and Janet Frame examines these surfaces with dazzling word play and wit. Her heroine's promise to entertain is kept, yet beneath the hilarity at the constant appearance of 'the replica' lies despair at the absence of 'the original' and that way lies madness. The shifting persona in this novel is not merely a playful disguise but a confession of a loss of identity in a world where hearts are set beating with desire by a language with descriptions drawn from advertising, a language 'where fashion changes quickly, where once "wall to wall carpet" could inspire as "Glory be to God for dappled things", but no longer; where now "decramastic tiles" satisfied as "pale flakes with fingering stealth".'

Janet Frame's style is very much her own (this is her tenth novel) and yet there is an anarchy in her logic and an ability to make much out of little which is reminiscent of Henry Miller. Take her code for writing:

> A prose sentence which touches like a branding iron is good. A sentence which keeps its feet clean from beginning to end is good. A sentence which, travelling, looks out of portholes as far as horizons and beyond is good. A sentence which goes to sleep is good, if the season is winter; bad, if it is early spring. A sentence which stumbles on useless objects instead of buried treasure is bad.

Living in the Maniototo is the most original and resourceful novel I have read for a long time; her sentences look out of portholes.

Elizabeth Troop's new novel also disturbs the conventions of narrative, but in a much more restrained, more English way than Janet Frame's. *Darling Daughters* contains a novel within a novel. Kate Wainwright is mother of two maturing children, daughter to complaining, geriatric Eva, ex-wife to Dom, lover to the younger, insouciant Simon, a TV producer. Kate is also a novelist, one who is getting on quite well in life, whose work 'has never been better'; when she sleeps, 'no cries come from my mouth. No cry disturbs the peace of my sated, once-marital bed.'

Simon is engaged on a production of Kate's latest book — the book we are about to read, in which Kate is the little girl Sarah and her mother, Eva, a much younger, fussy, attractive Ellie. The framework device is a simple one, but one which might have gone badly wrong, with the appearance of two novellas having been bunged together for the lack of a novel. *Darling Daughters* avoids this. The small novel-within-the-novel is an enjoyable piece of wartime fiction, perceptive and brought to life with many period details. Most impressive of all is the style — deadpan, naive and funny — which Ms Troop has evolved for writing about childhood: 'The third of September 1939, unless you were Gran, Ellie and Sarah, was notable for the fact that Britain declared war on Germany that day. They noted that, but it was also the day they moved out of Rathmines Avenue . . . It was an irrevocable decision, like Chamberlain's.'

Ms Troop's novel also has its irritating features; for example, some glib nods in the direction of feminism which are unconvincing and appear to be the effects of 'a language where fashion changes quickly'. Nor was I always convinced by the precocity of young Sarah. In love with a poet from Scotland, twenty years her senior and lacking a sense of responsibility, she is asked one day,

> lying in the hot sand, if she could see living in London with him — they'd get a room together, she could study, he write . . . She had put her arm over her eyes and seen the room: brass bed, a kitten, books, an Indian rug, lamps made out of Chianti bottles . . . It was an illusion. She was not that stupid. It was at that moment she realised she was older than Lev.

Only a few lines before, the newly pubescent Sarah had 'found herself looking at him constantly, and for him when he was not there.' Few are born with the sort of hard-headedness attributed to her in the former quotation and most gain it, if they gain it at all, the hard way: by succumbing to that kind of illusion, even if they have enough sense to glimpse it. To suggest that Sarah had instantly progressed beyond her idol in the maturity league is, curiously, to do this very human little heroine less than justice.

The translated language of Yashar Kemal's novel adheres to no fashion at all, unless it be the mawkish mode of the fairy tale. *The Saga of a Seagull* is a fable; it begins with the boy hero, Salih, finding a seagull with a broken wing on the sands of his Turkish village. His attempts to have the wing mended and save the bird's life succeed only in alienating him from his unsympathetic family and, later, his friends. It is interesting for the way in which it attempts to entwine myth and realism, but the realism is usually shaky at best and the language bears no resemblance to the way anyone ever thought or spoke and hardly anyone dared to write. Here is Salih calling to his friend Temel:

> Wake up, Skipper, wake up, do! How can a man sleep at night if he sleeps so long during the day? Open your door, merchant man, open your door . . . My camel be yours, but let me in . . . Come on, Skipper, wake up, do!

These sentences are not looking out of portholes. □

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Rick Rogers

Black studies

The Education of the Black Child in Britain by MAUREEN STONE *Fontana* £1.95
Multi-Ethnic Education: The Way Forward by A. LITTLE & R. WILLEY *Schools Council*
Educating Immigrants edited by Joti Bhatnagar *Croom Helm* £12.50

Schools are a key area for achieving a just multi-ethnic society. By and large though, the struggle is being lost. Many black children — the boys more than girls — reject the white British school system. Too many schools offer an irrelevant curriculum and an unsympathetic environment.

That much most followers of schooling are aware of. We pin our hopes on well-intentioned if occasionally flawed attempts to redecorate the white walls —and keep our white fingers crossed.

Yet, Maureen Stone argues in *The Education of the Black Child in Britain,* it is those very attempts at multi-racial education that have sold black children short. Crudely, the teaching of basic skills is dumped in favour of providing opportunities to play in a steel band.

She challenges a fundamental assumption of MRE: black childen have a 'poor self-concept' and therefore need bolstering up. Stone says this is nonsense:

> a false and dangerous argument based on incomplete and unsound theoretical assumptions and biased research findings. By focusing on self-esteem, it manages to ignore the vast body of evidence showing that working-class and black families have much less access to power, to resources of every kind, than middle-class children. 'Self-concept' becomes a way of evading the real, and uncomfortable, issue of class and privilege in our society.

Two sets of tests (Piers-Harris and Ziller) were wheeled out by Stone for black children in comprehensives and supplementary (or Saturday) schools. The results showed that self-concept was high (and better for girls). Attitudes to school — and to teachers — were less negative in supplementaries. All children had 'positive' feelings about parents and home life. So, argues Stone, it is what the schools offer that is wrong not the under-achieving children.

Stone fingers, in part, the Plowdenesque influence of developing 'relationships' with children at the expense of teaching them something — the teacher-as-social-worker criticism. 'The perfect teacher for West Indians was a traditional no-nonsense teacher who knew her subject and knew how to teach.' (Not just West Indians, some would say.)

So the book's main recommendation is 'for the use of more formal methods of teaching West Indian children throughout primary and secondary schools' — plus more funding for supplementary schooling.

Stone's book is just one of several current critiques of multi-racial education. The recent Schools Council enquiry *Multi-Ethnic Education: The Way Forward* reveals there is not much MRE around, and little that is at all successful. Curriculum development and in-service training 'requires support and extension if it is to have serious impact'. Once again, the two key problems are repeated: meeting the needs of West Indian children and servicing the *advanced* language needs of children for whom English is their second language. The Council's 60 recommendations come down to more resources and (with a different emphasis from Stone) a substantial development of a multi-ethnic curriculum in *all* schools.

Another new study, *Educating Immigrants,* looks at nine countries' policies including Britain's. The book demonstrates that Britain is not alone in having to get to grips with the issue nor alone in being pretty poor at it. (This is a peripatetic book, and in that way competent and informative, but lacking a useful comparative dimension; it doesn't even explain whether there *are* worthwhile comparisons to be made.)

WHAT all these studies offer are school-based 'solutions', in the full knowledge that the schools can do all that is asked of them (even the more wholesale changes implied by Maureen Stone) and still fail. For they are set in a society with deep-down discriminatory responses, by both design and default. Stone makes it clear that: 'The issues are far too complex, and are tied in with other economic, social and political factors which schools in themselves can do little about.'

Thatcher's stated aim is 'to keep the British character from being swamped by people with a different culture.' That means — among other unsavoury things — minorities are expected to assimilate into British society ('Be like us') rather than to integrate (a mutual moving together).

The implication of integration in *schools* means much more than just putting on black studies — a concept that never really took off and which has largely been superceded by the philosophy of multi-culturalism across the whole curriculum: a minefield in itself. And it is a difficult prospect when we don't know how many black teachers there are (except too few), nor even how many pupils. One estimate has put it at one black teacher in every 700, compared with one black pupil in 40 — or 25 depending on whom you include. The CRE also suspects, but cannot yet prove, that a disproportionate number of black teachers are unemployed.

As for the other problem, the need for a realignment in language teaching, it's a movement that's only just started. At present, teaching is almost exclusively European: why should 81 per cent of pupils take French? It bears no relation to the second-language or mother-tongue distribution at home, nor to the economic or employment value of languages. None the less, this issue is an intriguing mirror for the problems and contradictions that can bedevil a multi-ethnic curriculum. For example, how do you preserve mother-tongue rights without endangering other rights such as acquiring a sufficient competency in English to operate effectively through school and beyond?

Bhikhu Parekh has put the European language bias down to 'the narcissism that pervades English society'. It's a narcissism that is hurting a lot of people — and it could kill.

Kai Bird

Nightmare in the Kremlin

The Road to Gdansk by DANIEL SINGER *Monthly Review Press* £8

'The red mole may weave unexpected patterns and assume strange disguises; it is digging, digging fast, and moving in roughly the right direction.' It is this proverbial 'red mole', burrowing away in Poland (and yes, even in the Soviet Union), that accounts for Daniel Singer's uncanny optimism in his important new book, *The Road to Gdansk.*

While most of us have been mesmerised by the always impending Soviet intervention in Poland, Singer's book quite rightly manages, almost, to trivialise the feared invasion. If it happens, an invasion will of course have tragic consequences. But an invasion has always been a calculated risk for the Soviets, never a foregone conclusion. Far more worthy of our scrutiny, says Singer, is the remarkable fact that the Polish workers 'have the complicated task of winning concessions from the authorities while simultaneously *propping them up'*.

It is the weakness of the system, the entire Gulag empire, that should command our attention. That it is so vulnerable to precisely that constituency, the workers, in whose name it claims legitimacy, suggests more momentous changes in the offing.

'The sixty days culminating in the Gdansk agreement not only shook Poland beyond recognition,' writes Singer. 'By showing that the apparently impossible can be achieved, they have opened new ways for the labour movement throughout eastern Europe and, as such, have found their place in our common history.'

Singer is quite aware of the difficulties. Stalin may be dead, 'but he is also very far from buried, and it may take generations to get rid of the stench. The reason is obvious. To bury Stalinism really means to revive the idea of socialism and to begin its construction all over again, a prospect as deadly for the aged leaders of "really existing socialism" as it is for the old capitalist masters.'

And so it seems today in Solidarity's Poland where striking workers, bearing photos of Pope John Paul II and wearing crucifixes round their necks, are nevertheless in action socialist, feared by the Kremlin *and* the New York and London bankers who own so much of Poland's foreign debt. But Singer is really arguing that Poland is only the beginning, that indeed, it must eventually return to the periphery, for, 'the decisive conflict will ultimately have to be fought within Soviet frontiers'.

Indeed, he predicts a Polish future, so to speak, for the Soviets, in which:

> The deepening economic crisis will soon give the Soviet leadership no choice but to embark on a serious reform of their system of management, thus upsetting the artificially preserved political stability. Class conflicts should come to the open, giving rise to a movement from below for the first time since the 1920s. Here

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lies an unprecedented opportunity for a socialist opposition in the Soviet Union.

Wishful thinking? Perhaps, but Singer's prophecies are particularly intriguing when you realise that he wrote this and similar arguments on the Polish workers at least one month *before* the Gdansk shipyard strike. In fact, all but the last chapter of *The Road to Gdansk* was written before the summer of 1980. The Polish upheaval only crowns Singer's argument. Three self-contained essays form the bulk of the book: 'Solzhenitsyn: the Witness and the Prophet', 'The Soviet Union: The Seeds of Change', and Poland: The Workers Enter the Stage'. Only the postscript, 'Third Act in Poland', was written after Singer visited Poland during the dramatic weeks of August 1980.

If Singer can be optimistic about the survival of Solidarity, it is only because he believes that 'Brezhnevism too contains the seeds of its own destruction'. In brief, his argument goes like this: 10 per cent growth rates in the 1950s have given way to a 2 per cent growth in national income by 1979. A bottleneck has been reached in which the Soviet rulers can no longer count on an inexhaustible supply of surplus and regimented labour to rescue them from all the well known deficiencies of Soviet style 'planning'. The annual increase in the urban work force in the 1960s was three million; by the latter half of the 1980s it will be nil. Moreover, today's highly industrialised economy is much more dependent than before on skilled labour. Soviet workers are more highly educated than ever before — and consequently have quite different expectations than even 20 years ago.

Given the stagnation creeping up on the economy, Soviet rulers — both Brezhnev's apparatchiks and the 'technocratic' wing of the Party — must somehow greatly increase worker productivity without jeopardising the political system. This, Singer suggests, is probably impossible:

> Each year now young people are entering the labour force having at least the equivalent of high school education and are offered broken-up tasks below both their qualifications and their ambitions. As the balance within the working class tilts in favour of these newcomers, the difference also narrows between them and the mass-produced technicians and engineers, sharing the feeling that they have no control over their performance and no understanding of its purpose. The aim of the establishment — apparatchiks and technocrats alike — is to set these two groups apart, competing for rank and reward in the hierarchical structure. The duty of a socialist opposition will be to unite them in the anti-hierarchical struggle over the control of the means of production and the shape of society at large . . . the prospect of such an alliance frightens the rulers . . . This ghost haunts not just Warsaw or Prague, but also the Kremlin.

Well, now the ghost has taken on flesh in Warsaw and freely stalks the streets infecting all with its subversive heresies. Admittedly, as the East German Marxist dissident Rudolf Bahro wrote in 1978, 'the centre of the crisis is the Soviet Union itself', and the Kremlin may, even before this summer's critical Polish party congress, decide to invade. But if so, as Bahro said of the 1968 Czech intervention, an invasion can only accelerate 'the general, comprehensive and fundamental character of the crisis'. Let us hope so. □

Amrit Wilson

More than jet-set sexism

The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies by BARBARA ROGERS *Tavistock Publications* £3.95

Developing societies used to be called 'underdeveloped countries' and they used to be colonies. Now most of them are neo-colonies, their economies controlled by Western capital and guided by development agencies such as the World Bank. Through these countries Barabara Rogers takes us on a very special guided tour — one where the guide is blindfolded for most of the journey. It is a journey where it seems to be understood that because we are looking for and at discrimination against women, we should avoid seeing anything else. Underdevelopment is presented as a technical problem which the agencies are trying hard to solve, the trouble being that the men in charge of these agencies keep getting it wrong. If only they could deal with their sexism, or if some of them could be women, things would be just fine.

Occasionally we have a glimpse of the real picture. We are told, for example, that development planners are the successors of the colonial service, but Rogers does not dwell on this. She moves on, castigating the colonial service not for its destruction of economies or its treatment of colonised women, but for its lack of opportunities for First World women.

One of the themes of this book is that Third World women who, in Africa in particular, have the main responsibility for farming, are having their land taken away from them. Women who don't own land outright but have customary rights to its cultivation and produce are losing those rights; women farmers are being classified as farmers' wives and dependants, and expected to work on the cash crop though they have no stake in the product, while the subsistence crop on which they spend most of their time is not even mentioned in the Gross National Product. All 'development inputs' from the agencies are concentrated on cash crops on male-owned land. As a result food production is falling, malnutrition is increasing and so is overwork for rural women.

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All this is vital for an understanding of development policies. But why is it happening? Rogers ascribes it wholly to the over-riding sexism of development planners. Nowhere does she suggest that women in the Third World face a more powerful enemy than the sexism of men at the UN or FAO, nor does she analyse the role of this sexism. Does it determine or merely facilitate the implementation of imperialist policies? Do the agencies oppress Third World women for the sake of it, or in order to exploit them and their people? Because Rogers seems to regard imperialism as irrelevant she fails to see that farmers are turned to cash crops not for sexist reasons but in order to meet First World needs, to buy First World exports.

As for the struggles of the people of the Third World, they seem to be too far away to be recognised through the academic feminist's telescope (the book was written on a fellowship from the University of East Anglia). Rogers would have us believe that the forces for change in the Third World are the well-intentioned, if sexist and therefore misguided, development planners. The implication is that if the women employees of the development agencies win their battle against sexism they will be able to go out and liberate the women of the Third World and bring on prosperity at last. To be sure, Barbara Rogers gives some prime examples of male chauvinism both among the development jet-setters and among Third World men. Unfortunately, however, from Rogers's perspective feminism has nothing to do with the struggle against imperialism but is an alternative to it. In that sense, *The Domestication of Women* is a deeply reactionary book. □

GEORGE STEINER

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S.J. Newman

The liberation of John Donne

John Donne: Life, Mind and Art by JOHN CAREY *Faber* £9.50

Donne is the very model of a modern intellectual: ambitious, subversive, dissective and guilty, 'with fear of missing, shame of getting, torn'. The malcontent of the Lothian portrait poses abstrusely, inviting and resisting speculation, on the cover of John Carey's book. In black-and-white, of course, the wintry peevishness disappears; the dead eyes brighten; the bony fingers look supernaturally soft, like blanched salsify.

Donne is Hamlet without the play, aesthetically tortured, the first English poet to cross-examine his medium. His secular poems, for example, violently yoke love and poetry to the world of use — his intellect roaming the bedroom like a time-and-motion man checking the cost efficiency of every screw. John Carey concedes Donne's defects on page one, then writes a book which defiantly justifies them on two levels, social and imaginative. On the first level Carey outlines Donne's career and investigates his personality, mapping the wonderland of theological and scientific ideas in which he lived. Having previously treated Dickens and Thackeray as poets by gutting them of history, Carey here reverses the trick and treats Donne as a novelist — packing letters, sermons and documents round the lyrics; locating the origins of his art in Donne's vexed relationship with Elizabethan Catholicism and his insatiable urge to succeed in the world. The poet emerges as a Renaissance Stendhal, 'a master of back stairs and side alleys, hard-up, outcast, victorious'.

The ideas come into focus sharply but the personality is missed. Like a frustrated Frankenstein, Carey discovers everything except the bit that makes the eyes light up. In any case the book's other dimension (the imaginative) undermines the notion that a poet can be explained by biography. Carey isn't ultimately concerned with the man and lover. He prefers to experiment on the remains, the poetic residue. Like Lawrence — with whom he compares Donne — Carey finds the non-human more absorbing than the human: his critical sensitivity detects those weird signals which things like bones, sperm, hair, gold, teeth stir in the blood.

All the same, the pressure of analysis tends to melt individual poems at the edges, to blur their shape. Carey's strength can seem merely strenuous. For, if he has an exceptional capacity to sit under the surface of a poem like a water-baby until he becomes part of its life, his best effects are achieved by force. Extracts are ripped from their homes and herded into concentrated paragraphs. Some sentences are so condensed that they'd set less original writers up in business for life. His central chapter 'Bodies' displays a resourcefulness at once subtle and exultant. Of an image synthesising marriage and sacrifice Carey writes:

Mary Evans Picture Library

Another view of Donne

> Despite the tenderness of the priest's approach we are inevitably aware that the lamb's bowels are going to end up on the floor, and that something comparable in its careful violence is to happen to the bride.

As reader you're encouraged to enjoy the feelings of both executioner and victim. Among other things, Carey educates us in the worst that has been known and said.

But although it charts the dark side of things — treachery, violence, mutilation, suicide — it's written with unerring brilliance. When you let your mind relax from Carey's persuasive arguments and scan his prose you discover a scornful festivity. If you can imagine a joy-ride through Bluebeard's castle you'll catch the spirit of Carey's achievement. In his own words, 'He has the air of a conqueror, or a conjurer, not a fellow sufferer'.

Brilliant, then, but disturbed and disturbing. A work of art, but in a way decadent or at least a sign of decadence. There's something wrong with English literature when criticism becomes an art. Carey draws attention to resemblances between Donne and Pater (and, presumably, himself) as types of frustration. In all three you can sense some wildly unconventional creativity being bottled up and driven in on its own secrets. When the mind copulates with itself, it breeds monsters. Is it a coincidence that Donne popped up at the beginning of the twentieth century along with Nietzsche, Freud and Marinetti? Defendant and prosecutor of his own trial, Donne is torn between power and punishment. His God, as Carey says, is 'a heavenly powerhouse, with all circuits ablaze . . . an explosion of energy'. No mistaking Carey's excitement there, or his sense of its undesirability in late-twentieth century liberal England — or, conversely, his sense that, in its way, liberalism is as tyrannical as the Lord God of nuclear fission. No wonder his last chapter,

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'Imagined Corners', is about living where the hinge pinches, where opposites meet.

Literature has been squeezed inside the narrow guts of the Academy for too long. Academic criticism tends to be an act of appropriation, a way of keeping the ethereal and haggard extremes of the imagination under the establishment's control. Though Carey has no intention of relinquishing this control, his book is more an act of liberation than of appropriation. It's richly creative, smuggling the pride and power of the Renaissance back into our unkneaded dough-baked modern prose. Anyone interested in contemporary writing should read and re-read this pathology of an intellectual poet by a poetic intellectual.

Bruce Page

UK at risk

The End of British Politics? by WILLIAM L. MILLER *Oxford* £17.50

THIS is a specialist book which addresses itself — by way of some complex analysis — to a problem which ought to concern, and alarm, every citizen of the United Kingdom.

England, the principal component of our Union, is Tory territory. But Scotland is not. Scotland, because it is a more working-class country, has long displayed a stronger Labour-voting propensity: but the subject of William Miller's investigation is the recent process by which Scotland's historically modest class-based anti-Tory bias has begun to be reinforced by a further anti-Tory bias based on nationalism.

At the 1979 General Election, English voters produced a Tory lead of 11 per cent, while Scottish voters produced a Labour lead of 10 per cent — a difference of 21 per cent. And that merely puts into arithmetical form a feeling that any English visitor can tap by going into a Scottish bar and asking what people think of the state of the economy. '*We* didn't vote for Thatcher, whatever the English did.'

If you take the easy view that Labour is bound to win a Westminster majority at the next election, this discrepancy may not seem too worrying. But, as Peter Kellner has shown more than once in the *New Statesman*, Labour's present electoral form offers, in truth, no such easy prospect. Even a slight modification of Thatcherite dogmatism — even a modest injection of the realism that overcomes most governments when there is an election in prospect — would give the Tories an excellent prospect of consolidating their hold upon the UK.

But the prospects go just the other way in Scotland. And, as Miller says, any future Tory Secretary of State for Scotland is likely to find himself or herself imposing unpopular policies without the legitimising force of either Scots votes or Scots MPs to help. In doing to, he will damage 'not only his party, but the Union itself'.

> The SNP are bound to attack an imposed Secretary imposing unpopular policies, both because they dislike the policies, and because they feel the policies have not been produced by 'due process'. Scots Labour, who now control most local councils, will have to decide whether to treat the Conservative Secretary gently and so risk abdicating the role of opposition to the SNP, or risk making the SNP's case by attacking strongly. The Unionists in Labour's ranks may wish to attack Conservative policy decisions . . . while avoiding any attack on the system that imposes such distinctions on Scotland. *But that may prove too fine a distinction and devolutionists in the Labour Party will find it difficult to forget that they came so close to winning control of Scots domestic government in 1979.* The Act granting an Assembly, and the rules granting NEC powers to the Scots party are still tucked away on the bookshelf at home and still remain official policy.

As we all know, Scotland's role in Labour politics has been to provide, reliably, a block of 40-odd MPs without whose presence a Labour majority at Westminster is almost impossible to envisage. But those votes are not generated out of unionist sentiment alone: they are provided on the implicit understanding that Labour can win effective control of Britain's government reasonably often.

That understanding is what makes 'British' politics possible. But, on a reasonable guess, one more case of non-delivery will destroy the credibility of the system. For Conservatives, the problem is awkward in the short-term, but not debilitating in the long-term, because the Tories do not need Scottish votes in order to hold an electoral initiative in Westminster terms. Just the contrary: with a little quick footwork, any Tory government could re-embrace the politics of devolution, and offer the Scots a practical opportunity to free themselves from the worst domestic consequences of England's reactionary temper.

That would be a dark enough future, for even people who are not themselves socialists would admit the danger of a near-permanent control of English politics by the Tories and their allies. But, as Miller says, there are worse prospects which are credible. If even devolution fails, and if British governments will not reflect the different bias of Scottish voting:

> then voting itself may become less of a credible option. There is at present a remarkable low level of popular support in Scotland for political violence over devolution or indeed over other special Scots interests. But while low, it is not negligible . . . (even) the Kirk's Church & National Committee have considered 'why all attempts to obtain self-government have failed . . . Looking back to the past it sometimes seems as though British Governments will yield only to violence, or at least to non-violent disobedience to the law'.

Because Britain has a long and especially stable Parliamentary tradition, 'British' politicians tend to assume that they inherit a degree of expertise in constitutional issues. Yet the truth is that the modern world contains many examples of British constitutional ineptitude — they may be sought in the Indian sub-continent, in Cyprus, in Canada or Nigeria.

Somehow, it's been suggested that the 'Westminster model' has failed to operate in those countries because of the political incompetence of the ex-colonials involved. Ireland already suggests that the failure lies closer to home. Scotland may yet provide the final, tragic proof.

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MUSIC

Andrew Clements

Rare quality

Carlos Kleiber *Festival Hall*
Palestrina *Collegiate Theatre*

Even for an orchestra that has lately made something of a speciality of taking on 'difficult' conductors, the London Symphony Orchestra's concert last week with Carlos Kleiber was an enormous coup. It was Kleiber's first London appearance in the concert hall (though he has been a reasonably regular visitor to Covent Garden) and, since for many he has authentic claims to greatness, it was an occasion out of the ordinary. Yet Kleiber's concerts are always likely to be rather special: he conducts only a small number of scrupulously prepared works and strictly rations his appearances. Thus, until now we in Britain have had to rely on his handful of recordings, all of them superlative, quite distinctive. It might all have been the stuff of a carefully manufactured legend, of a reputation that could so easily have been shattered last week. In the event, almost all one's highest expectations were gloriously fulfilled.

The single disappointing feature of the concert, quite unexpected, must be mentioned and then forgotten. The orchestral playing was not of the highest standard, hardly approaching in technical detail the best the LSO produces regularly for Abbado and some guest conductors. Given Kleiber's reputation for an obsessive attention to detail, demanding extra rehearsal time for every concert he conducts, the result was surprising. Wind chording and tuning went astray too often for comfort and some entries were less than unanimous. Yet the LSO was never less than utterly attentive, responding more quickly and more precisely to mood and manner than one would have thought possible on a first encounter with a conductor: the same combination had played an identical programme in La Scala a week earlier. Within a deliberately rough-and-ready texture every instrumental detail was made to tell; psychologically it must encourage the players to know that every single contribution is allowed to register.

It was no surprise that the programme should consist entirely of works which Kleiber has recorded already: the overture to Weber's *Der Freischütz,* Schubert's third symphony, Beethoven's Seventh. No interpretation was unflawed; Kleiber rethinks things too radically for that. The overture began with a trace of uncertainty, yet in its exaggerated dynamic contrasts and spiky accentuation there was always the true sense of drama, not so much a concert performance of an operatic overture as an opera-house performance brought for a moment into the concert hall. Schubert's Third is lightweight and unpretentious, likely to collapse under too weighty a treatment, yet here there were the most sophisticated glosses without any lack of Viennese spirit, and with some positive gains in exuberance and rhythmic life. Kleiber takes the slow movement extraordinarily fast, turning a usually stately Allegretto into at least an Intermezzo, and its central section into a bucolic dance.

Kleiber's fondness for fast tempi and the starkest contrasts of dynamic and attack made his Beethoven 7 an overwhelming affair. His refusal to subordinate instrumental detail to a homogeneous 'beautiful' sound is nowhere more effective. The first full explosion of the orchestra in the Vivace of the opening movement discharged every bit of the tension carefully built up through the introduction, while in the Scherzo the brassy glaze given to the repeat of the Trio justified Beethoven's prolixity more convincingly than any other conductor could. I continue to have doubts about his high-speed treatment of the Allegretto; there is more weight and emotional freight to be carried here than he allows, but the finale was a massive celebration, stretching the orchestra technically and emotionally, and stretching the limits of one's experience of the movement quite profoundly. Kleiber's ability to rework and illuminate, as well as producing performances of the greatest physical and emotional excitement, makes him unique. It is difficult to think of anyone among present-day conductors to rank alongside him, and elating to discover one's opinion of him on record confirmed in the flesh.

IN A less exceptional week the first British performance of Hanz Pfitzner's *magnum opus,* the three-act opera *Palestrina* would have demanded top billing. But its eclipse is tactful, for the production by Abbey Opera could hardly do justice to this neglected masterpiece. The singing did not deserve such a standard of orchestral playing, and the opera itself deserves neither, nor a staging in the confines of the Collegiate Theatre. For *Palestrina* is Wagnerian music drama on the grandest scale, a superbly effective piece of musical propaganda against the forces of musical radicalism. The composer Palestrina is called upon by the Church to save polyphonic music from the rising Florentine expressivity, the 'New Art' which threatens it. Palestrina writes the *Missa Papae Marcelli,* which is sung at the Council of Trent, and temporarily at least the old order is preserved. Pfitzner himself fought a long rearguard action against the 20th-century musical revolution and the Second Viennese School in particular; first performed in 1917, *Palestrina* was his manifesto. Imagine an opera continuing the musical language of *The Mastersingers* rather than *Tristan,* and that gives some idea of the sound of the work. While one can only thank Abbey Opera for bringing the work to the attention of British audiences, we must wait for one of the major opera houses to do it justice, and until then content ourselves with the fine recording on Deutsche Grammophon, conducted by Kubelik.

Among this week's contributors:

BRUCE HEPBURN is a practising GP.

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TELEVISION

William Boyd

The uses of normality

'DON'T know nothing about normal. Normal runs in a little rut.' Thus an unrepentant Charles Manson in an extraordinary and unsettling interview shown on *Newsnight* (BBC-2). By chance — or fast work — we had the opportunity to see the footage even before it was screened in the States. Manson was questioned in an LA parole room by a perspiring, chain-smoking reporter called Tom Snyder who was heavily into the interviewer-as-antagonist approach. He patently hated Manson's guts, or at least gave that impression, and was so aggressive that Manson left his stool ('Stool getting hot, Charles?') and prowled tensely up and down the room in a state of jittery menace.

'Come on over here and hit me if you like,' Snyder goaded, swiping his dripping neck with a handkerchief. Snyder, one suspects, was fully aware of the unique possibility that had come his way and was prepared to coax every second of compelling TV out of it. Manson, with a full beard and shoulder-length hair, looking like a diminutive, manic hillbilly, was clearly rattled. When Snyder pinned him down to specifics — 'Did you tie up the La Bianca's that night?' — Manson would launch into hippy philosophising, ramble on about ecology or draw sinister analogues with celebrated villains from America's folk-history. 'It's like asking Jesse James if he shot anyone.' Snyder wasn't having any of that. 'I don't know what you mean. Get off the space shuttle, Charles,' he would rebuke whenever Manson's tin-whistle abstractions were aired.

Again and again Manson came out with phrases redolent of America's potent celluloid myths. 'We came down from Abilene . . .', 'there was a hole-in-the-wall gang there . . .', 'I'm an outlaw . . .' It was evident that the slogans and stereotypes of pop-culture that created and nourished the infamous 'family' had as firm a grip on his deranged imagination now as they ever did.

At one point Manson admitted that if he could get some help from the doctors and got 'my mind straightened up a little bit, maybe I can come back and play like a human'. He might stand a better chance of this in the States; certainly he'd get little assistance here if *Silent Minority* (ATV) was an accurate picture of life in our mental handicap hospitals. This was a harrowing and shocking indictment of a system that has abandoned therapeutic methods for purely custodial ones.

Some of the facts were impossibly hard to digest. One patient, classified as a 'vegetable', had spent 40 years of his life in bed before graduating to a bean bag for another ten. Then, one day when he was propped in a wheelchair he tried to make it move and, 50 years too late, the doctors realised that there was an intelligence locked away in his unresponsive body.

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The polemic of the programme seemed irrefutable, namely that so-called 'disturbed behaviour' in mentally handicapped people is not pathological but functional. It rises out of and is compounded by the systematic patterns of deprivation and neglect that life in mental institutions imposes, rather than being symptomatic of a particular disease or illness. This thesis was supported by scenes from a special unit for spastics called Beech Tree House. Here the most self-destructive and disturbed children regain standards of normality which allow release from long-stay hospitals. This is achieved through enormous patience and individual attention. The unit is run on the assumption that disturbed behaviour is in essence a problem of communication — attempts by the patient to communicate needs. It was astonishing to see how near miraculous recovery was brought about by efforts to provide genuine responses, other than slamming a cell door or penning inmates all day in wire compounds.

ANOTHER trapped life — but this time a fictional one — was presented to us in BBC-2's *Playhouse* production of Dorothy Parker's short story 'Big Blonde'. Hazel ('Haze') Morse is a big-hearted simple-minded model and good-time girl in Prohibition New York. Haze likes to live it up from time to time and is regarded as a real 'sport' by the boys. When she meets Herbie everything seems swell. They marry, rent a cute apartment and Haze throws herself into housewifery with the same unreflecting zest with which she used to enliven the speakeasys in New York. However, the idyllic marriage predictably turns sour. Herbie can't take her uncritical, cloying love — he thought he'd married a flapper — and duly abandons her. A distraught Haze gambles away her savings, drifts into casual prostitution and developes an addiction to hooch and Veronal. There's a botched suicide attempt before the play leaves Haze in a diminishing spiral of booze and progressively more repulsive and venal partners.

Superb period details and fine performances (notably Sally Kellerman as Haze) couldn't disguise the fact that this was a 12-page story attenuated to a somewhat tedious hour-and-a-quarter-long play. The undue length rather weakened Dorothy Parker's point that Haze was condemned not through any fault of her own but by constantly having to live up to the expectations of the men in her life. They didn't want her to be herself, they only wanted her to be a sport.

On the other hand the first part of BBC-1's documentary on the state of Israel, *Hanging Fire,* could have benefitted with more time. As it was we were rushed through a welter of interesting observations on life in modern Israel with scarcely a pause for breath. Unlike the recent hagiography on Dayan, this programme wasn't so convinced that it's all milk and honey in the Promised Land. Reporter Martin Young adopted a nice tone of subdued cynicism when interviewing a woman from the Halacha Institute — an organisation specially set up to find ways of violating the spirit but not the letter of God's Law. This involves such sophistry as abandoning electric bells for wooden railway signals in hospital, because you're not allowed to do anything mechanical on the sabbath. When you want to make a telephone call on the sabbath a programmed computer makes the connection for you, so that even though your fingers are pushing the numbers round and it looks like you're dialling, you're not really, *actually* dialling. Yes? Get off the space shuttle, Charles.

ROCK MUSIC

Mark Kidel

Continuity

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band
Wembley Arena

In a culture of fast-moving fashions, forms which have lost their magic are experienced as clichés. Nowhere is this more noticeable than in the world of rock music, where the feverish search for new sounds has become something of a disease. There are signs, however, of counter-currents reflecting the growth of a new tradition, a common heritage — musical and philosophical — that has developed around the various communities of rock fans and record buyers.

Within the context of a living tradition, there is a natural tendency towards conservatism; the magic that draws people together derives from a sharing of recognised structures and styles. A common language has evolved, built around the ritualised format of the rock concert and including many stylistic strands — from the raw emotion of the blues to the high frenzy of the new wave. Bruce Springsteen, who recently finished an ecstatically received tour of Britain, owes much of his success to the vibrant branches of the rock tradition: there are echoes in his music of all the discos, dance-halls and juke-boxes since the Fifties, and the instant familiarity of all his material has, for his mass constituency, irresistible attraction.

Springsteen's songs are hymns to the American Dream, celebrations of an unquenchable yearning for the open road and the romance of a brighter future. He incarnates the myth of the backstreet kid from New Jersey, poised between nostalgia and the need to escape his past, his machismo tempered by a boyish sensuality and the ability to fill his voice with undiluted emotion. On this side of the Atlantic, he fulfills our need for an imagined America, an horizon that beckons from beyond the constraints and patterns of our history.

The show I witnessed at Wembley was one in a series of five held in the same vast, impersonal hall. Unlike other performers who draw a gigantic crowd, Bruce Springsteen did far more than rattle through a long line of old favourites. He began with an intensity that is usually reserved for encores, and continued at the same pitch for the rest of the evening. He performed as if possessed, with unrelenting commitment, his tight muscular body drenched with sweat, fuelled by supplies of energy that seemed inexhaustible. Many rock musicians rely on theatrical gimmicks, or, reacting against such games, choose to play as if the audience did not exist. Springsteen and the E Street Band play unequivocally *for* the audience: they are up on stage, but they never pose or distance themselves, for every moment is clearly dedicated to enhancing the show and making the evening a very special kind of party.

Most of the E Street Band have played with Springsteen since the early Seventies, and the long years together have paid off: there was not a moment when they did not sound like one organism, composed of many distinct parts, but working in total harmony. The Springsteen sound owes a great deal to the symphonic productions of Phil Spector — a combination of the infectious rhythms of rock'n'roll with the wall-to-wall embrace of multi-layered voices and instruments. Springsteen and his band have very skilfully translated a sound created in the studio to the concert-hall, and credit must go, no doubt, to the engineer at the mixing-desk, for so successfully transcending the limitations of the cavernous Wembley Arena.

The Spector sound is one of the elements in Springsteen's style which might, in other hands, have slid into monotony and predictability; but it is used by him in celebration rather than in imitation, as a means of tuning into the culture and sentiments associated with the era of the Crystals, Ronettes and Righteous Brothers. There is, however, an important way in which the shared clichés that run through a Springsteen set differ from the traditions beyond our own culture. However much he is able to cut loose from the parade of fads and trends, he is still imprisoned by a network of attitudes and institutions that inexorably draw him away from his audience: the Wembley crowd was supremely well controlled, with strong metal barriers strategically placed to help the army of stewards keep the fans from getting too excited. It was a hell of a night, but something about the security precautions gave a strange flavour to the celebrations.

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THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

Dying laughing

Waiting for Godot by SAMUEL BECKETT *Round House*
Barnum by CY COLEMAN & MICHAEL STEWART *Palladium*
No End of Blame by HOWARD BARKER *Royal Court*
Charles Charming by CLIVE JAMES *Apollo*

Why should the new *Godot* run 50 per cent longer than the import from South Africa we saw last March and yet be described by an indisputably sane colleague as 'brisk'? The reason, quite simply, is that it fills the spaces between those lines by now so familiar to students of Franco-Anglo-Irish Lit. The play is actually more about waiting than about Godot; and that means chattering, joking, bickering through today, tomorrow, the next day, the next and the next in a desperate attempt to avoid the omnipresent danger of becoming human anti-matter, part of the black hole Beckett sees all around.

More often, however, the gap-filling takes the form of fun. Beckett has advised the actors playing Vladimir and Estragon to keep Chaplin at the backs of their minds; he has given them the odd vaudeville routine to perform and most productions, including Braham Murray's now, bolster the impression by plumping Laurel-and-Hardy bowlers on their heads. But rarely can the humour have been so prounounced as Max Wall and Trevor Peacock make it now: funny walks, gratuitous prancing, prolonged juggling with the battered hats, and more amusement extracted from the cross-talk than my bumbling imagination had reckoned possible. Who would have thought that Mr Peacock could have triggered our laugh-glands with the archetypally glum apophthegm, 'there's no lack of void'?

It is unusual to see two performers acting, reacting, engaging, disengaging as pointedly as this; and yet I do have the odd complaint. Vladimir and Estragon are superego and id, interdependent opposites, the one intellectual, questioning, optimistic, resilient, altruistic, the other fleshy, pessimistic, self-pitying, passive, sullen. Wall, with his death's-head face, downward twist of the lips and shambling, seen-it-all manner, doesn't strike me as a natural candidate for Vladimir; and Peacock's distraught gormlessness, though engaging in its own right, misses the sour-and-bitter side of Estragon. Indeed, there are times when the production's humour, if not exactly exaggerated, seems miscalculated. Beckett has said both that the play's pratfalls are 'related to the threat of everything falling' and that its spirit is that 'nothing is more grotesque than the tragic'; and this presumably means that we should feel the possibility of disintegration actually within the down-at-heel buffoonery. This time, we don't always do so. It is a rich, riveting production but one deficient in a vital ingredient: harshness.

Crawford in Barnum: disappointing razzamatazz

AT THE Palladium, there's a lot of hokum about Barnum or, if you like, Barnum about hokum: superabundant servings of razzamatazz can't disguise how very conventionally-conceived, thin and dull the story actually is. Both the week's remaining offerings have been reviewed in these columns before, *Blame* by myself from Oxford last winter; and its transfer gives me the chance to apologise to Paul Freeman, an unusually bold and ballsy actor, whom I arrogantly rechristened. He plays, if you recall, a cartoonist roughly based on our own Vicky: a crusader tormented and finally broken by contradictory pressures both external and internal. Is his duty to his own vigorous perception of the 'truth', to the long-term interests of the 'people', or to whom or what? The play is more absorbing than I remembered, bundling us from Hungary 1918 to Russia 1934 to London 1973 with the theatrical dash we associate with all British dramatists whose first name is Howard; but it still seems a bit implausible (that meaningful ending!) and 'literary' at times, as well as wanting in trenchancy.

Some strange chivalric impulse, akin to that Clive James feels for the Royal Family, brings me to the defence of *Charles Charming,* which has been widely rubbished. James's crime, it seems, is that his rhymed fairy-tale doesn't combine the qualities of Pope, Butler, Byron and Barry Humphries, and his delivery isn't that of Guinness, McCowen, Frankie Howerd and Rowan Atkinson. Perhaps it goes even further than this. Can't have antipodean yobbos playing witty buggers on the boards Sibyl Thorndike once trod. Let's cut the smirking sod down to size.

A personal confession here. James the TV critic maddens me by squandering his considerable mental and verbal gifts on such fripperies as how Harry Carpenter pronounces Wmbldn; and I trotted into the Apollo ready to recommend him for compulsory re-education in Botany Bay if his theatrical debut didn't turn out to be a collaborative effort by Jeremiah, St Simon Stylites, Coleridge and Lenny Bruce. Well, it isn't. It is engaging and amusing. It creates a distinct character in its Charles, a diffident, puzzled Action Man; and he and others are nicely personated by Russell Davies. Even the poem's respect for constitutional monarchy isn't too appalling, when you remember what Juan Carlos saved Spain from the other day. Not for the more exacting brand of *NS* puritan, I suppose; but far from contemptible, all the same. □

FILMS

John Coleman

Stage-whispers

The Last Metro (A) *Curzon*

In a *Sight and Sound* interview (autumn 1979), Francois Truffaut spoke, among future projects, of making a film about France under Occupation. 'I shall have to check my files and meet some Jews who worked clandestinely in Paris during the war and who will tell me of their experiences.' The result is as fascinating a movie as he has made in years, bristling with cruel detail, finely photographed in muted colour by Nestor Almendros, cunningly scripted by Suzanne Schiffman, Jean-Claude Grumberg and Truffaut himself. It ought to be an

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outright winner; and, if the number of awards bestowed on it in its native country is anything to go by, *The Last Metro* is all that, and more. The title neatly signals the film's content. Under the curfew laws, Parisian theatres and cinemas timed their performances so that audiences could catch their trains before 11 pm. And the theme here, a running one with Truffaut, is the eerie relationship between Art and 'real life'. In *Day for Night,* it was the closed, impassioned world of film-making itself that provided the entertainment. This time — and with a greatly increased potential for resonances — it is the fortunes of the Théâtre Montmartre that are under scrutiny.

Officially fled to South America, Lucas (Heinz Bennent), the theatre's celebrated German-Jewish director, is in fact hiding out in the cellars beneath. His beautiful film-actress wife, the icily Aryan Marion

Deneuve on a wifely visit

(Catherine Deneuve), has taken over the reins, the faithful assistant director Jean-Loup (Jean Poiret) has a period Norwegian melodrama in rehearsal, a tough new leading man, Bernard (Gérard Depardieu), is to star opposite Marion. Others in a company of whom Renoir, master of such revels, might have been proud are a lesbian costume designer (Andréa Férréol), an ambitious young soubrette, an amiable stage-door man and an ageing dresser with problems of her own. Lucas contrives a way of listening in to the on-stage activity via an airshaft and hence — as Marion makes her wifely visits, feeding him, cutting his hair, snatching a little rash love — of indirectly controlling the play-in-progress.

The lurking threat to this tight-knit 'family' and to the theatre's continued existence is one Daxiat (Jean-Louis Richard), a virulently anti-Semitic reviewer of considerable influence. His awful authenticity on screen may come in part from the fact that he is lifted very much from life: a journalist called Alain Lambreaux wrote under the pseudonym Daxiat and the beating administered to him by Jean Marais (on whose memoirs the script draws) is echoed when Bernard lays into the film character. This scuffle in the rain leads to a fierce estrangement between Marion and her leading man, for whom she had been falling; and the point is stressed again when Bernard later tells her he must leave the company to work full time for the Resistance — Marion's immediate reaction is to slap him, hardly a conventional blow for freedom.

But the freedom in question is, of course, that of the artist. For Marion, horribly torn between clandestine married life and the demands of the theatre (leaving aside her passion for Bernard), the show *must* go on. And one recalls a remarkable review by Truffaut, to be found collected in *The Films in My Life,* of Claude Autant-Lara's *La Traversée de Paris,* another piece set during the Occupation — and slily paid homage to in *The Last Metro* — where Gabin and a pal hawked a black-market pig round Paris. For once, Truffaut came to praise Autant-Lara (this in 1956) and the terms in which he did so are significant for the Truffaut of today: *'La Traversée* . . . is not trivalised by having political, social, or ideological labels attached to it.' This is not to suggest that this new tale of Paris under the Germans is unreflectingly theatre-bound, 'art'-obsessed to the point of non-commitment. Far from it. The hideous business of stirring up hatred for the Jews, and of some general complaisance towards it, is steadily kept before our eyes and ears, not only in the beastliness of Daxiat and the bitterness of the cellared Lucas but in such near-incredible details as a couple of read-out crossword clues to which the answers are *'youpin'* and *'youtre'* ('yid', 'sheeny' — take your pick).

But the film will do nothing so retroactively simple as to come down wholesale against *les boches.* Bernard can't stomach an array of officers' caps in a restaurant cloakroom and sweeps out; scattered Gestapo men in raincoats are sinister, conventionally. Yet a street scene may glancingly take in a German soldier peacefully seated at an easel, daubing away. Marion, in search of higher authority to save her theatre, finds the bigwig she had hoped to help her has killed himself and a half-mad German officer enigmatically clutching, squeezing her hand as he tells her this truth, stammers out his admiration.

Writing too soon after the event of the film, I can see already that it is likely to open out in the memory. Wry jokes abound — *'Mehr Licht!',* mouths Lucas, recalling his (attributed) Goethe, climbing some stairs. 'He'd be good in *The Hairy Ape,'* says Daxiat shrewdly, watching Bernard retreat from his proffered hand. Visually and verbally the texture is very rich. To be honest, though, the performances of Deneuve and Depardieu left me expecting more and — crucially — more *between* them. An animal grappling apart, their feelings are to be read as much from their context as from their faces. There is a chill at the heart of things. □

Carol Rumens

An easter garland

1

The flowers did not seem to unfurl from
slow bulbs.
They were suddenly there,
shivering swimmers on the edge of a gala
— nude whites and yellows shocking the
raw air.
They'd switched themselves on like
streetlamps
waking at dawn, feeling wrong,
to blaze nervously all day at the chalky
sky.
Are they masks, the frills on bruised
babies?
I can't believe in them,
as I can't believe in the spruces and lawns
and bricks
they publicise, the misted light of front
lounges
twinned all the way down the road,
twinned like their occupants, little
weather-house people,
who hide inside and do not show their
tears
— the moisture that drives one sadly to a
doorway.

2

My father explained the working of the
weather-house
as if he seriously loved such things;
told me why grandpa kept a blackening
tress
of seaweed in the hall.
He was an expert on atmosphere,
having known a weight of dampness
— the fog in a sick brother's lungs
where he lost his childhood; later, the soft
squalls
of marriage, and the wordier silences.
In the atmosphere of the fire
that took him back to bone
and beyond bone, he smiled.
The cellophaned flowers outside
went a slower way, their sweat
dappling the linings of their glassy hoods.

3

My orphaned grass
is standing on tiptoe to look for you.
Your last gift to a work-shy daughter
was to play out and re-gather
the slow thread of your breath
behind the rattling blades,
crossing always to darker green,
till the lawn was a well-washed quilt
drying, the palest on the line,
and you rested over the handlebars
like a schoolboy, freewheeling
through your decades of green-scented,
blue,
suburban English twilights.

4

In the lonely garden of the page,
something has happened to your silence.
The stone cloud has rolled off.
You make yourself known,
as innocently abrupt
as the flared wings of the almond,
cherry, magnolia;
and I, though stupid with regret,
would not be far wrong
if I took you for the gardener.

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Weekend competition

No 2673 **Set by Mark Jenkins**

The verb Anglaisteamanager ('to manage an England football team') would be parsed as follows: Je manage, tu me congratules, il ne score pas, nous nous fail-to-qualifons, vous me criticez, ils riotent. The verb Benner ('to render a party more Benn-like') might go: Je Benn, tu es reselecté, il quitte pour le SDP, nous nous disputons au publique, vous me characterassassinez, ils sont perdus ses deposits. Got the idea? Other thoroughly irregular French verbs, please, by 3 July. Max five verbs each.

No 2670 **Set by P.W.R. Foot**

Descriptions of plants named after living people.

Report **By Jeff Squiffy**

How we roared at your St John Stevases! (Most of them, alas, were spiked by the lawyer.) But the hilarity was cut short by She Who etc., back from her Highland jaunt unamused and pointing out an ambiguity in the setting: it could have meant 150 words per flower, or it could have meant 75. No matter; we shall dish out a tenner to each person whose name appears in the winners' list, regardless of how many of their blooms make it into print.

Carlus Asininus, commonly known as Horse's Arse, flourishes best in rich soil. Plant in a surround of media to bring out the distinctive purple hue. Its floral crest, in the form of a triple-plume, has earned it the title of 'pride of Wales', though it is not native to that country. It prefers a soft bed and would be killed by hard grafting. Closely associated with the Australian creeper, *Clivus Sycophantus.*

Lady Diana, or Young Man's Fancy, was totally unknown until fairly recently. Its demurely-hanging head is now seen everywhere, and it may also be recognised by its attractive double-stems which are translucent, especially when viewed in the Sun. Its colour is peaches-and-cream and its scent is redolent of a children's nursery. Despite its negative response to horse-manure, it is now linked in public affection with Carlus Asininus. Both may be seen at their exotic, if useless, best on 29 July.

NAOMI MARKS

Antonius Bennii — Monstera Impatiens. Characterised by fantastic blossoms which turn a deeper shade of red each season. Habitat: An adaptable plant which will grow almost anywhere provided it is supported by grass roots. Cultivation: Requires hot temperatures, responds well to constant attention. Has a tendency to creep if not firmly staked. Propagate by reselecting annually.

Dionysus Healii — Crassula Robustica. Large fleshy leaves; has a rough bark. Habitat: Prefers middle ground; thrives in the dry atmosphere of an office. Cultivation: Dislikes draughts and turns blue if neglected. Resists any attempt at training. Propagates continuously — the problem is rather in preventing it. Should be pruned vigorously.

N.B. These two plants should not be grown together.

CAROL ROWNTREE

The Pale-Blue Scented Stevas, or Nosegay Campion. Exquisite, but watch out for the sharp little barbs! It is only distantly related to the common pansy. Thrives in the house, to the extent that it occasionally needs pruning back or even firmly uprooting. Is apt to go limp in a strong light; might perhaps last longer if transplanted to another place upstairs?

Tycoonus Gannexiensis (commonly known as Harold's Overcoat). Hardy climbing plant; tends to take over if uncontained. Formerly cultivated in Downing Street; nowadays less favoured by fashion, being regarded as a weed and confined to scrubbier terrain. If allowed to, does well for itself in urban or industrial milieus — the fact that these are somewhat shady being no disadvantage.

JIMMIE PEARSE

The Larkin Plant *(Larkinia melancholia).* This popular but rare indoor plant is difficult to cultivate, requires the minimum of water, and is best kept in a dim corner of a very silent room. Early in its life it will produce small flowers, delicate blue and exquisitely formed, but later blooms are miniscule and infrequent. On no account sing to it: its leaves will fold in on themselves. Distant cello soloes may perk it up. Repotting is impossible; cuttings are inadvisable and may destroy the plant entirely. After many years, all leaves will fall away, leaving a distinguished but slender stem which leans to the right. Wild Larkins are almost never seen, growing as they do behind sizeable trees in obscure forests. The Larkin's scent is of bitter almonds, and its roots are mildly poisonous.

BILL GREENWELL

A hardy hybrid formed by grafting *Catlinia Verbosa* upon *Brittainiensia Misericordia,* the perennial *Shirley* is remarkable in that the pristine bold red of its bloom becomes, on long exposure to the atmosphere, so washed-out and etiolated that it is finally impossible to ascribe any detectable tint to its petals — though keen fanciers claim to be able to identify a few residual hints of the palest of pale pinks. The *Shirley* is also noteworthy for its increasing blowziness, especially when the weather gets rough, and its extreme fastidiousness re the other blooms it is bedded out with.

MARTIN FAGG

Wilting Jeremy: Once a popular bedding plant, especially in the West Country. Some aver that it bears a strong resemblance to the pansy, but it was more of a climber, in fact, with a liberal display of small neat flowers. It has now been banished from the catalogues and is seldom seen, although only a few years ago it could, it seemed, be found in almost every bed in the country.

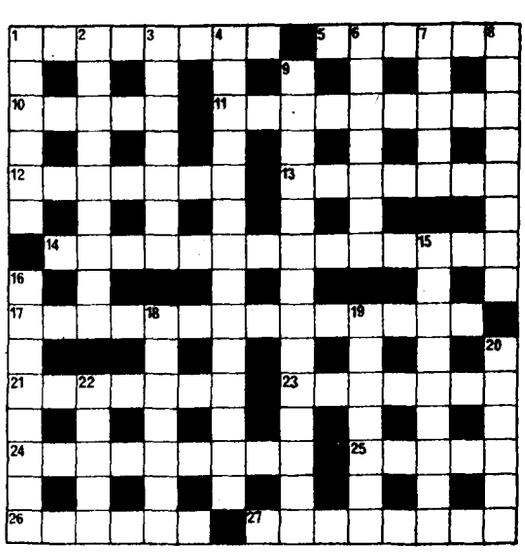
HARRISON EVERARD

Maggia Thatcherus (commonly known as Iron Lady); this plant is indigenous to Lincolnshire and is popular in the south of England. It will not tolerate the wet, but once established it is vigorous and difficult to control. Excellent for cutting, it has a large deep blue flower which lasts for about five years. After it has bloomed, however, the plant dies and should be dug out and replaced. Eating the leaves is reputed to cause anorexia nervosa.

V. ERNEST COX

Weekend Crossword 1386

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1386, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 3 July.



ACROSS

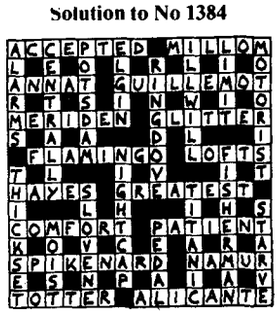
1 Make a writer change for dinner (4,4)
5 'I have — full with horrors' (*Macbeth*) (6)
10 Bird which makes mother cry (5)
11 Approving alternatives in conclusion (9)
12 Vegetable killed just about everyone (7)
13 Genoa's part of Italy (7)
14. Easy time in the grammer lesson (6,8)
17 Factory work which puts service before play (14)
21 Potentially bad sign for a part of the body (7)
23 A single track dye (7)
24 Wrongly steering east for a place in Africa (9)
25 A king would make this girl red (5)
26 Part of front where rockets are heartlessly deployed (6)
27 Means of communication needed in a period without company (8)

DOWN

1 Most injured so puts me in final (6)
2 Shoes in which the scoffer goes astray by the sound of it (9)
3 The flower to intimidate someone in the field (7)
4 The voter here gets mixed up when about to add up the votes, but not dishonestly (4,3,7)
6 Honest but not grand (7)
7 Former church leader (5)
8 Read wrongly after chief magistrate has marked passages (8)
9 It is not instructive for children to be wrongly cautioned by a grown-up (5,9)
15 Once I hit fifty runs, but it was a very long time ago (9)
16 Situations in which the devil is given preference to fools (8)
18 Tree for people in part of theatre in front of the circle (7)
19 If there were no engineers this vessel would have possible merit (7)
20 A noisy place is wrongly blamed (6)
22 Coin named after a sovereign (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1384



Prizewinners to No 1384

M. Callan (N Shields)
David Daggers (London)
Mrs E. Miller (Ayr)

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Knowledge of relevant legislation and previous experience of Industrial Relations is essential — preferably, but not essentially, in the NHS or Local Government.

Remuneration on incremental scale depending on qualifications and experience. Five weeks holiday; interest-free loans for car and season ticket available.

Application form and details from: The Secretary, BAOT, 20 Rede Place, London W2 4TU. For informal discussion telephone IRO on 01-229 9738/9.

Completed application forms to be returned by Friday, 10 July.

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Applications are invited for the above post from a wide age range. The work includes the conducting of negotiations, the servicing of committees, assistance with professional and organisational activities and maintaining contact with local groups of the Association's members in UK universities.

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need a

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Please apply for job description to:

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RESEARCHER required for a period of one year to work on the research project based in Islington. Applicants should have a good honours degree together with research experience, and have the ability to relate to the young black person. Knowledge of statutory and voluntary agencies is also desirable. **Salary scale £7,632-£8,139 plus £915 London Weighting Allowance.**

RESEARCH/CLERICAL ASSISTANT required for a period of one year initially, to assist in the research project based in Islington. Applicants must have 'A' level qualifications and the ability to build up a rapport with the young black person. Experience in dealing with statutory and voluntary agencies is also desirable. **Salary scale £5,268-£5,901 plus £915 London Weighting Allowance.**

For further information and application form write or telephone:
The Community Education Trust,
9 Manor Gardens, London N7 6LA
01-272 4231
Closing date: Friday 3 July.

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Temporary Lectureship in West European Politics

Applications are invited for the post of Temporary Lecturer in West European politics in the Department of Political Theory and Institutions. Candidates should have some research experience in and substantive knowledge of one of the major regions of Western Europe.

The post is tenable for one year from **1 October, 1981**, at a salary within the range **£6,070-£6,880** per annum.

Applications, together with the names of three referees, should be received not later than **13 July, 1981, by The Registrar, The University, P.O. Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX,** from whom further particulars may be obtained. Quote ref. RV/825/NS.

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An important message about a forthcoming series of encounter groups.

You may like to know that applications are currently open for a small number of people to join a special encounter group to be held shortly in London by Group Workshops.

The group, which will comprise a maximum of eight and a group leader, will meet each week over a period decided by the group itself to try and distinguish clearly between values in life that are real, and therefore help us live more completely, and those that are nonsense.

Why?

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To question the meaning of life embarrasses others, so they prefer not to hear. In a group, we choose to hear. And in so doing, discover a great deal more about the way we feel about ourselves, and other people.

If you feel you would like to join this group, telephone Paul Williams or Christine Richardson of Group Workshops on 01-733 7874 (there is a 24hr Ansaphone service) for full details and an application form.

The cost of being a group member will be £7.50 per weekly workshop. Demand for group places usually exceeds the number available, so if you are interested please get in touch as soon as possible.

Group Workshops is a non-profitmaking organisation.

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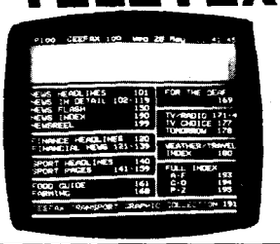

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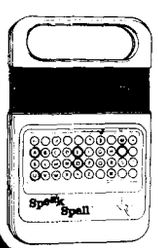

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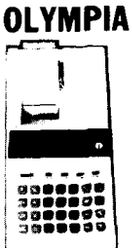

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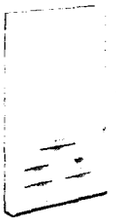

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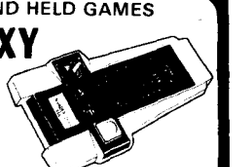

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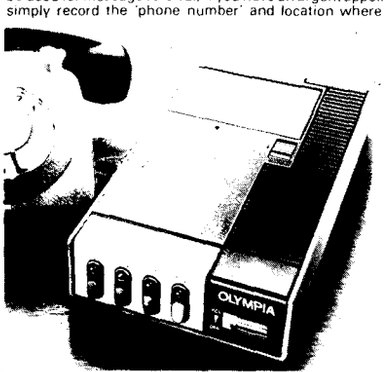

The machine is easy to install and comes with full instructions. It is easily wired to your junction box with the spade connectors provided or alternatively a jack plug can be provided to plug into a jack socket. Most important, of course, is the fact that it is fully POST OFFICE APPROVED.
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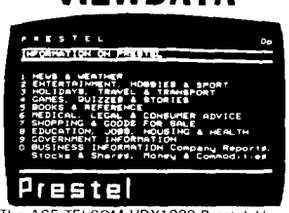
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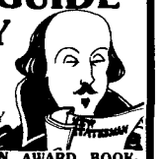

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Theatres

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NATIONAL THEATRE 928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'The Shoemaker's Holiday', 'Man and Superman', 'A Month in the Country'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'Measure for Measure'. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'One Woman Plays', 'Sergeant Musgrave's Dance'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

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CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES 10 JULY

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Meetings

A NATIONAL CONVENTION of Black Teachers. Sat. 20 June 10.30-4.30 p.m. At Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Ad hoc Committee of Black Teachers.

CUBA'S REVOLUTION in Education. An illustrated talk presented by the Britain Cuba Resource Centre. Marx Memorial Library, 37a Clerkenwell Green, Thursdary 25 June at 7.30 p.m. Adm. free. All welcome.

HISTORY WORKSHOP London Seminar. Barbara Taylor, Miranda Chaytor & others: Feminist round table on 'The Family' in history. 'Bull & Mouth,' Bury Place, WC1 (2 mins Br. Museum). Monday 6 July 7.30-9.30 p.m.

ICA EVENTS, The Mall, London SW1. 24 June 7.30 Third in the series of 6 evenings entitled 'The Poet as Historical Witness' with Dennis *Brutus and Mbulelo Mzamane.* Tickets £1.00 (ICA Day M'ship 40p). 930 3647.

'THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS': Speakers: Dan Leon (Socialist View), Ronnie Jacobs (Herut Party). Monday, 22 June, 8 p.m., Hillel House, 1-2 Endsleigh Street, WC1. Org. by Young Mapam, 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. 01-328 2554.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries 06285 26464.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, summer programme. Sunday 21 June 8 p.m. ULT Day Commemoration Meeting. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

LIVING ON THE FRONT-LINE: A PUBLIC MEETING IN MANCHESTER

The Apartheid war machine attacks Angola and Mozambique. **Armando Guebuza,** Vice-Minister of Defence in the Peoples' Republic of Mozambique, and a senior SWAPO representative will describe life on their side of the Southern African front-line. Gus John will speak on Britain's front-line.

3 p.m. on Saturday 27 June 1981, Main Debating Hall, Students Union, Oxford Road, Manchester. Child care available.

Organised in support of the Stop the War Against Angola & Mozambique Campaign.

South African Freedom Day Rally

26 June 7 p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1

Speakers:

O. R. Tambo — President, ANC (SA)
Archbishop Trevor Huddleston — President — Anti-Apartheid Movememnt
Armando Guebuza — Member of the Central Committee, Frelimo Party
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Conferences

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE of Journalists Against Nuclear Extermination. Sat. 27 June 10.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m., PCL, New Cavendish St. Inf. contact: Organiser, Magazine Branch, Acorn House.

EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION RETHINKING SOCIALIST STRATEGY

Conference of Socialist Economists 1981
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CSE, 16 St Alphonsus Road, London SW4

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